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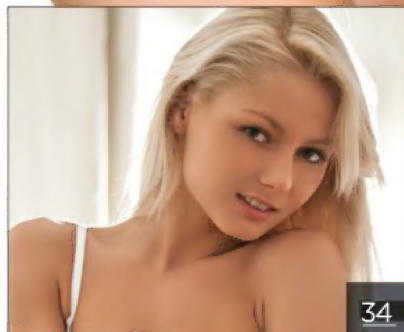
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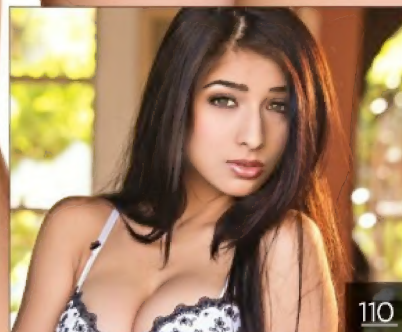
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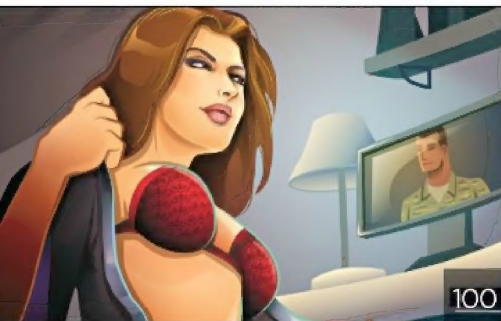
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Vegas Heat



For an EMT, 48-hour shifts patching up victims of fender benders and bruised-up brawlers on the Vegas Strip were painfully monotonous. Just like every other weekend, I knew this one would be busy. I was sure to be running from call to call all night. I figured I'd be lucky to get dinner in.

I was checking out my rescue when Serena, an old friend, called and said she was headed into town. We'd met at the Crazy Horse years before it had closed. She was bartending, and I had blown my last \$40 for a lap dance with the twins. We had struck up an easy conversation, with her comping me a couple of drinks. Unable to tip her, I felt foolish and promised to return. Skeptical, she just shook her head and waved me off.

I returned the next day near lunchtime, leaving her \$60 and a note with my number in an envelope, never expecting her to call. When she did, it was the beginning of a two-year fuck fest. You name it, we tried it. When she left, it was abrupt, and I always wondered if she had wanted more out of the relationship than deviant sexual encounters.

Now, almost eight years later, I was going to see her again. Her voice hadn't changed—that soft, sultry,

Her love of being spanked and images of dirty, rough sex came flooding through my mind.

seductive tone still capable of making my heart skip a beat.

"Jason?" she asked quietly. Trying to hear over the equipment running in the background, I plugged an ear. "Jason?" she asked again.

"Serena," I stammered.

She said she was in town for a bachelorette party and wanted to meet me for coffee. God, I wanted to. Would have died to, had I known, but I'd just started my shift. Certain she could hear the disappointment in my voice, her response came as a surprise.

"Would you like me to come by the station?" she asked.

I thought for a moment. I hadn't had anyone at the firehouse in years. A lot of the guys' girlfriends stopped by, along with the occasional badge bunny, but I was one of the "older" guys now. I could just imagine the questions. What the hell.

"Fuck, yes!" I heard myself say.

Remembering I was working, I started to tell her that I would be superbusy most of the night, but she

stopped me and asked if the next morning would be a better time. Other than me being exhausted and wanting sleep, the morning would be the slowest part of my shift, allowing us more time to catch up. Besides, most of the guys would be asleep, and administration would be gone Saturday morning.

We agreed on 0800 and were off the phone after I reminded her which station I was at. She laughed again and said, "I remember."

As I predicted, it was busy as hell. Dispatch kept us on the go the entire night. Our dinner consisted of cookies from one of the hospital break rooms. Throughout the night, I filled my partner Mike in on Serena.

As the sun came up, I looked at Mike. He looked like hell, his eyes bloodshot and cap pulled low. I glanced in the mirror on the visor, realizing I looked no better. We slowly made our way back to the station.

As we drove around toward the bays, I noticed a sexy little thing standing near the parking gate. Mike looked at me, wide-eyed. "Serena? You didn't mention she was fucking gorgeous," he stammered.

Standing barely five foot two, at 115 pounds with curves in all the right places, I remembered the pet name I had for her—"my little spinner." Mike drove up and let me out as he pulled the rig around. As she walked up to me, my eyes met hers and we pulled each other into a hug. It seemed so natural, as if the past eight years had been eight minutes.

As we stepped back and stared at each other, she rubbed her hand on my rough face.

"You remembered I like you a little rough," she said mischievously. I knew she did, but I wasn't going to mention that it was because I hadn't had two seconds to myself in the past 22 hours.

"Aren't you going to show me around?" Serena asked.

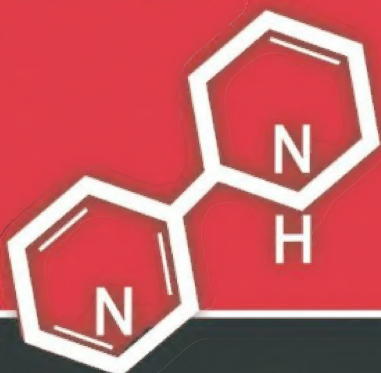
"Of course. Where are my

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Fred Couples
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manners?" I said with a laugh.

I let her know that most of the guys would be sleeping, so we'd have to stay in the bays for a while. She bit her lip, then ripped open her coat. She said, "We should take some pictures."

We quickly relocated, and as I watched Serena posing in different sexual positions on the bumper, my desire began to grow. I watched as she molested the growler on the bumper, and then mounted the bumper line. Holy fuck! Was this really happening?

"Let's get some pictures of you in the back," I suggested.

Helping her off the high bumper, I noticed that she was breathing about as hard as I was. "Just a couple more," I said. Opening the back door to the cab as the hydraulic stairs dropped loudly, I helped her walk up the steep steps and climbed in behind her.

As I entered, she pulled me straight on top of her, her lips meeting mine in a lock that was amazing. I realized she hadn't changed a bit as I felt her grinding her pelvis against me from below. God, I needed her. I grabbed a thick handful of her hair. When I pulled somewhat hard, her gasp told me she still liked it rough.

It was a momentary whirlwind as I began stripping her body. The floor of the cab was rough rubber, so I left my coat beneath her for a little padding. My hands moved up under her shirt as hers dove into my work pants. Feeling my hard cock must have driven her insane, as she began clawing frantically at my belt. I released the clasp on her bra, found her stiff nipples, and rolled them between my fingers. She cried out and arched her back from the stimulation.

What a picture: my muscular body mounting her tiny one, her hands resting on my belt, bra ripped from her body, her hair tousled. My hands found the button on her pants, and she lifted her butt so I could pull them off. I wasn't surprised to see that she wasn't wearing any panties—some things never change.

She finally had my belt off and pulled it free from the loops. So many memories came crashing back—her submissive traits, her love of being choked, of being spanked—and images of dirty, rough sex came flooding through my mind. So many things we had done willingly with each other. I pulled her shirt off her body, and she was completely naked. Quickly, I looped the belt around her neck as she moaned.

Pulling my shirt off, I revealed my



I pushed in slowly, slightly dragging along her tight walls. She was always an amazing fuck.

sculpted chest and arms. She smiled approvingly. My boots came off easily, my pants right behind them, falling into a neat mess on top of the turnout bottoms. When my boxer briefs came off, my thick, hard cock bounced free.

My fingers found her wet pussy and massaged her tight hole. Simultaneously, I started to cinch my belt, watching that it didn't pinch her skin. Her guttural moan as I slid two fingers inside her cunt was music to my ears.

I slowly released the belt as I finger-fucked her, sensing her getting closer to orgasm. I slid my fingers out, licking them clean and leaving quite a bit of spit on them. I rubbed it all over the length of my cock and then placed it at her slick opening.

She greedily grasped my cock, rolling it in a circular pattern, trying to get my thickness into her. She was soaking wet, but it had always been a challenge for her to take me initially. She worked it though, and I was reminded how hot and silky she felt when I was balls-deep inside her. I had never had anyone else since who felt as good. I pushed in slowly, slightly dragging along her tight walls. As I sunk in to the root, I gradually tightened the belt again.

Remaining on my knees, I pulled the belt tight as I started to pump inside her. My free hand found her hard clit, and began massaging it in

time with our thrusts. I watched and felt as she bucked on my cock. She was always an amazing fuck. My cock began to glisten from her juices as we picked up speed, and the engine began to rock back and forth as we got into our rhythm.

"Do you want to come on my cock?" I asked, still pounding her pussy. I knew this would drive her straight to orgasm. Her body became rigid upon hearing it, and she screamed out as loudly as she could with the belt around her neck.

"Yes!"

I felt her body tense as she reached her climax. She arched into me as I released the belt, and her pussy began to involuntarily contract, grabbing and releasing, milking my cock into orgasm.

I felt her pussy suck the heat through the base of my cock, my balls lifting as I filled her with my hot seed. I tried to remain quiet as I exploded inside her. Failing, I dropped to her chest, covered her lips with mine, and kissed her.

We lay there for a few moments, sweating and breathing heavily on top of each other. As our breathing began to slow somewhat, we looked at each other, smiling and laughing.

We quickly dressed and were out of the engine in a matter of seconds. I asked if she'd like to come inside the station now, and she grinned and said, "Next time."

I wondered after she left when the next time would be, but I just received a text from her, and it looks like there's another bachelorette party in August.—J.D., Nevada

More letters on page 122

What Stauer Clients Are Saying
About Our Hybrid Watches

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Forget sleek and subtle, the Stauer Colossus Hybrid is one tough timepiece...now for less than \$50!

Never underestimate your competition. Just ask Demetrius, the unfortunate Greek general who set out to conquer Rhodes in 305 BC. He assumed that a massive force of 40,000 men, a fleet of Aegean pirates and an arsenal of wall-smashing war machines would be enough to crush the tiny Greek island. He was wrong. The Rhodians were tougher than he thought. And so is this watch. If you've always believed that the biggest, baddest watches had to cost big, bad money, the \$49 Stauer *Colossus Hybrid Chronograph* is here to change your mind.

A monument to toughness. The people of Rhodes were ready for Demetrius and repelled his attack. To celebrate, they built the Colossus of Rhodes, a 107-foot bronze and iron giant that towered over the harbor like a ten-story trophy. It warned future invaders that "Rhodes is tougher than you think." You give the same message when you wear the Stauer *Colossus*.

The timepiece that works twice as hard. The *Colossus Hybrid Chronograph* will keep you on schedule, but it's about much more than time. The imposing case features a rotating gunmetal bezel that frames the silver, black and yellow face. You'll find a battalion of digital displays on the dial arranged behind a pair of luminescent hands and a bold yellow second hand. Powered by a precise quartz movement, the watch is doubly accurate in analog and digital mode.

The *Colossus* is packed with plenty of handy extras including a bright green EL back-light for enhanced nighttime visibility, a tachymeter along the outer dial and a full complement of alarms and split-second countdown timers. It secures with a folded steel bracelet that highlights a row of striking dark center links. It's a rugged watch that's more than ready for your daily grind.

More watch for less money. Big-name watchmakers raise their prices because they can get away with it. But Stauer wants to turn luxury on its head. We sent the *Colossus Hybrid* to an independent appraiser who works with auction houses, luxury estate sales and insurance companies. He valued the watch at \$199.* We thanked him for his professional opinion and then ignored it. Because we still want you to wear it for **ONLY \$49**.

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THE KING OF PULP FICTION VISITS JOYLAND

Stephen King is doing his part to keep pulp fiction thriving by publishing his latest book, *Joyland*, through a small publisher and only in paperback, with no eBook edition.

By Tom Callahan





When he was a kid, in the 1950s, Stephen King devoured 25-cent paperback novels with garish covers that promised thrills and excitement. At the time, pulp-fiction novels were found in pretty much every drugstore and newsstand in the nation. King has said that those books fueled his young imagination and gave him his first lessons in storytelling.

But cheap novels by such publishers as Dell and Avon and Popular Library are long gone. Hard Case Crime was created in 2004 to fill the void, and is dedicated exclusively to mystery pulp fiction. Its first 66 releases were paperback originals, famous for throwback covers featuring beautiful women in states of undress and often distress. Hard Case has published reprints by the masters of the mystery genre—including Ed McBain, Lawrence Sanders, and Donald E. Westlake—discovered lost works by such greats as James M. Cain, and printed original novels by younger rising stars of the field, like Jason Starr. One of those original mysteries in 2005, *The Colorado Kid*, was by King. It became Hard Case's only best-seller and the basis of the popular TV series *Haven*, which will be going into its fourth season this fall.

Charles Ardai, 43, is the editor of Hard Case Crime. He started the imprint after founding and selling off the internet firm Juno. He originally approached King to ask him if he would write a promotional blurb for Hard Case books. King shocked Ardai by saying he'd rather write a book. Now King has come back to Hard Case with *Joyland*. "I think he not only enjoyed the experience of seeing his work published in the Hard

***Joyland* is a combination ghost story, murder mystery, and coming-of-age novel set in an amusement park in the summer of 1973—and a damned fun story by the reigning King of the Pulp.**

Case Crime style—classic paperback format with stunning painted cover art—but he also wanted to help support what we're doing," Ardai says. "The sales from one Stephen King book enable us to publish a dozen other books by deserving writers who are less known."

Joyland is short for a King novel, not even 290 pages. It's a combination ghost story, murder mystery, and coming-of-age novel set in a North Carolina amusement park in the summer of 1973. College student Devin Jones is a "21-year-old virgin with literary aspirations." He takes a summer job at the park and suffers his first heartbreak when his girlfriend back home dumps him. When he learns that a young woman had her throat cut four years earlier in the park on the "dark ride" through the haunted house, he says of the girl's ghost, "I hoped I would see her." But before he leaves *Joyland*, he will get involved with a dying child who might have the "sight," and the child's beautiful, embittered mother.

"*Joyland* is special," Ardai says. "Not only because it is a beautiful story that will break your heart, but it's got a great cinematic setting and a pulse-pounding climax. It reminds me of *The Shawshank Redemption* and *The Green Mile* in some ways."

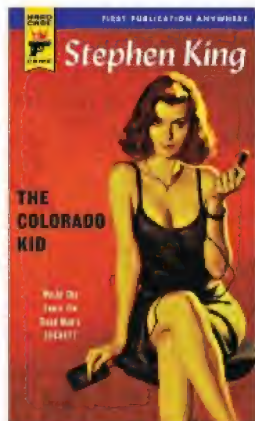
For decades, pulp fiction was looked down upon, although Quentin Tarantino popularized the term with his 1995 movie. Pulp was cheap literature for the masses and often sensationalistic, whereas "serious" and "highbrow" literature was considered high art. Conventional wisdom held that serious novelists would try to write the Great American Novel, whereas pulp writers were just trying to titillate in order to make a quick buck. But good writing is good writing, and the pulps boasted some terrific storytelling and great writers, no matter what English professors thought. And when you look at King's body of work, it perfectly fits the

definition of pulp.

"There were many different types of pulp fiction back in the 1930s and 1940s," Ardai says. "There was horror pulp and crime pulp and romance pulp and science fiction and Westerns, and many of the best writers wrote for all of them. I have no doubt that if Steve had been alive then, he would have been king of the pulps. He is a born storyteller and can write any type of story. *Joyland* has elements of horror, of mystery, of romance, of nostalgia—and he nails all of them."

Joyland is set in a time before communication technology conquered our lives, when regional amusement parks were popular. But beneath the parks' wholesome fun for families, there was something sinister and slightly sexual about the carnies and fortune-tellers, with their ability to separate rubes from their money, and the occasional "cooch" show. In fact, probably the greatest noir novel ever written (later made into a great movie) was about a carny. *Nightmare Alley*, published in 1946—the year before King was born—was such a bleak story that it came as little surprise when its author, William Lindsay Gresham, checked into the Dixie Hotel in Times Square and killed himself. Welcome to noir.

While King's *Joyland* is pulp, it is not pulp's more nihilistic and apocalyptic cousin, noir, which eventually became the basis of film noir. King offers his readers a more positive experience. "In our modern digital world, we need more than ever the chance to remember what life was like before we experienced it through a thousand tiny screens," Ardai says. "The smell of an ocean breeze, the touch of a lover's lips. A book like *Joyland* reminds you what it's like to feel these things—what it's like to be alive. It is the most precious gift any writer can give you." And it is a damned fun story by the reigning King of the Pulp. **FF**







GOOD-BYE GORGEOUS

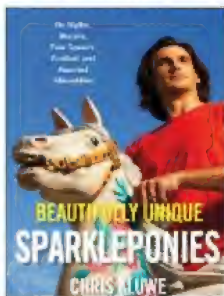
A new book charts the grisly career of New York gangster Vincent "Vinny Gorgeous" Basciano, who went to prison for life in 2007.

***Vinny Gorgeous: The Ugly Rise and Fall of a New York Mobster*
By Anthony M. DeStefano**

A staff reporter for *Newsday*, DeStefano previously chronicled the arc of Bonanno crime family boss Joseph Massino, who, in 2004, became the first official head of one of the Five Families in New York to turn state's evidence. Here, DeStefano focuses on Massino's right-hand man, Vincent "Vinny Gorgeous" Basciano, a psychopathic killer and loyal lieutenant who took over for Massino when the boss went to jail in 2003. Basciano was once wiretapped telling a group of fellow gangsters, "I got faith in one guy," that guy being Massino. When the boss rolled over a year later—as DeStefano reported in the October 2012 *Penthouse*—Basciano's faith was rewarded with multiple convictions, including two for murder, one of which came with a prosecution request for the death penalty.

Sports Book of the Month (That's Not Really About Sports)

***Beautifully Unique Sparkleponies: On Myths, Morons, Free Speech, Football, and Assorted Absurdities*
By Chris Kluwe**



Kluwe, who until this past spring was the punter for the Minnesota Vikings, sounds off on a wide range of topics in this collection of short essays from Little, Brown and Company. His take on the NRA and "Second Amendment gun nuts" is as well-informed and logical as it is hilariously over-the-top, and his essay on gay marriage may just be the most reasonable argument ever made on the topic. He also addresses Ayn Rand, Jesus, bigotry, Kurt Vonnegut, bad toilet paper, racism, the Supreme Court, and—oh, yeah—football, including the Super Bowl, the NFL draft, and the 2011 lockout. Kluwe may be a one-trick pony on the field, but off it, he's practically a Renaissance man—and he's one of our 2013 badasses.

Zombie-Novel Excerpt of the Month

***From Fiend*
By Peter Stenson**



A recovering meth addict, Stenson has a new take on the well-worn genre: His main characters, Chase and Typewriter, are tweakers who emerge from their darkened crank lair one afternoon to discover, gradually, that the zombie apocalypse has happened while they were on a seven-day meth bender.

Here they are encountering another human being—a trucker at a rural Shell station—for the first time since realizing their situation:

"... Then I realize the trucker has got to be holding, and a taste would be about the best thing I could imagine.

"... Typewriter raises his gun again. You holding?

"The man narrows his eyebrows. He shakes his head like he's not following. Typewriter pumps the stock. He asks again—You holding?—and the guy puts his hands up in mock confusion. I'm thinking that it's so fucked up, us junkies, our inability to get honest with anyone, how we keep pleading ignorance, innocence, even in the face of two loaded shotguns and worldwide death. This guy standing here like he has no idea what *holding* even refers to, this guy with eyes like train tunnels and a jaw like a gearshift, he will continue this act until he has no alternative. It's a form of survival. I get it. I do it."



DVDs

BY KARA WAHLGREN

REVIEWS

Summer Redux

Some are back from the dead, while some are just back in the kind of roles where we love them best. We're looking forward to these happy returns.



WARM BODIES

If your girlfriend complains about the brutal violence of *The Walking Dead*, she'd probably agree that the world of cinema went far too long without a "zom-rom-com" genre. In this creative, campy romantic comedy—which was a surprising hit with critics—a zombie named "R" meets Julie, a human hottie on a postapocalyptic mission to find medical supplies. After eating Julie's boyfriend's brain, R absorbs his lovey-dovey memories and finds himself falling for Julie—with reanimation as an unexpected side effect. Zombie fans can get their fill of undead action with the Blu-ray combo pack, which features a gag reel, deleted scenes, and behind-the-scenes footage.



SNITCH

This drug-smuggling drama follows a common theme among movies starring the Rock/Dwayne Johnson: You do not fuck with the Rock. In this case, his deadbeat-dad character learns that his son has been framed by drug-dealing friends and is about to serve ten years in prison. Dad strikes a deal with a local politician—if she'll reduce the kid's sentence, Dad will infiltrate a dangerous cartel as an informant. Needless to say, significant amounts of ass are kicked along the way, and the chase scenes and shoot-outs are what high-def was made for (in our humble opinion). Bonus features on the Blu-ray include deleted scenes, director's commentary, and a making-of documentary.



RING OF FIRE

The ReelzChannel's doomsday series plans to make brain candy out of end-of-days scenarios. In this first installment, volcanic dominoes are the threat du jour—a greedy corporation drills for oil below the Earth's crust and accidentally kicks off a chain of eruptions that could trigger an extinction-level event. The special effects can be sort of cheesy, but at least we get to see some of our favorite TV stars: Terry O'Quinn (*Lost*) as the mogul with an evil streak, Michael Vartan (*Alias*) as the moral compass, and—unfortunately—no one as the hot-chick costar, with *Smallville* director Paul Shapiro at the helm. The DVD sets up the miniseries as a four-hour epic tale. **B+**



Mr. Emmerich Goes to Washington

In *White House Down*, German director Roland Emmerich brings his trademark mayhem to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.



White House Down

Jamie Foxx, Channing Tatum, Maggie Gyllenhaal

You may *think* you saw a White House terrorism movie last March, but that's just your mind playing tricks on you. Really, it is. No, actually, by the same coincidental Hollywood logic that sometimes lavishes us with two killer-asteroid movies or two volcano movies in a single year, here comes the second, more expensive, and (by all reasonable estimates) way funnier version of spring's tepid *Olympus Has Fallen*. Playing to the movie's significant advantage are three aces, one being Tatum, ready to finally cement his place on the A-list. Second is Foxx, contributing a thinly veiled piss-take on our current commander in chief: a bespectacled peace lover turned bazooka gunner. But the movie's main man could be director Roland Emmerich, who, after making *Independence Day*, *2012*, and *The Day After Tomorrow*, has learned a thing or two about massive-scale mayhem.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF (WHITE HOUSE DOWN) REINER BAJO/COLUMBIA PICTURES INDUSTRIES, INC.

**World War Z****Brad Pitt, Mireille Enos, Matthew Fox**

When zombies dream, do they dream of eating Hollywood A-listers? Thousands of flesh-chompers swarm in Pitt's latest, on which an obscene amount of money has been spent. We happen to think that's grand, even if the production was troubled and the release date was pushed back by six months. The source novel, a kind of fictional combat reminiscence, has been converted into a globe-spanning action movie—and there's smarts in that decision, especially since Hollywood hasn't done blockbuster horror in a while. *World War Z* looks to play like *Dawn of the Dead* on steroids: a film George Romero could only dream of getting funded, with helicopters, airplanes, and whole cities going down in flames.

**Crystal Fairy****Michael Cera, Gaby Hoffmann, Agustín Silva**

It's been a while since sensitive millennial It Boy Cera, of *Superbad* fame, uncorked his charming, if neutered, persona on-screen. But if you think this film's title refers to him in any way, you're in for a bit of a shock. Sebastián Silva's indie may be just what the doctor ordered for Cera's career: a chance to play against type as a drug-gobbling wastoid on a responsibility-free trip to Chile to score potent hallucinogens. Sporting an unbecoming mop top, Cera's character is looking to extend his wandering days as long as he can. The comedy played to lengthy fits of giggles at Sundance; we're approaching it with an open mind.

**The Lone Ranger****Johnny Depp, Armie Hammer, William Fichtner**

Who knows why Depp picks his roles? A half-drunk pirate who wears too much eye makeup? He's on it. A Mad Hatter with Michael Jackson's dance moves down cold? Why not? Now Depp takes on the role of the inscrutable Tonto, faithful Old West sidekick who, last we checked, was Native American. Not that such details matter when there are rifles to cock, railroad bridges to explode, and white men to call *kemosabe*. Almost as an afterthought (and second-billed in his own movie), *The Social Network*'s Hammer plays the title hero. This rising actor deserves better, and may just prove it in this, his first leading role.

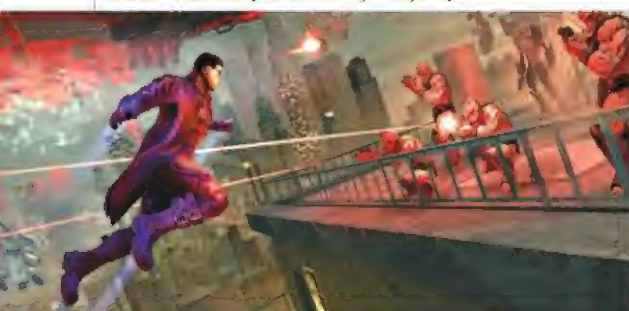
**Only God Forgives****Ryan Gosling, Kristin Scott Thomas**

It's already been two years, but we're still reckoning with 2011's *Drive*, the type of glorious L.A. crime thriller that we thought today's filmmakers had forgotten how to make. That movie's stoic badass, Gosling, prone to savage beat downs and coolly methodical getaways, now reunites with director Nicolas Winding Refn for a moody, Bangkok-set gangster drama. The trailer was stuffed with martial arts, machine guns, and mayhem—along with plenty of neon, a cryptic mom (Scott Thomas), and a revenge plot straight out of a Jet Li movie. In short: a perfect popcorn flick for the art house. **OT+M**



Saints Row IV

DEEP SILVER (XBOX 360, PS3, PC)



Crammed with chaotic missions, ludicrous storylines, and schlong-shaped weaponry, the *Saints Row* series has always been the less stuffy alternative to the *Grand Theft Auto* games. But with September's *GTA V* overflowing with extravehicular activities, the latest *Saints Row* needs to break new boundaries of absurdity to remain the most wide-open open-world game. And boy, does it ever. *Saints Row IV* mixes mechanical suits, superpowers, and even a cannon that kills with dubstep in a world where anything goes.

You play the President of the United States (actually, a *Saints* scion elected to office in a plot right out of *Idiocracy*). But before you get to abuse the Lincoln bedroom, alien invaders kidnap your entire cabinet and imprison you in a *Matrix*-style

virtual world. Here, you and a second co-op player flip the bird to the laws of physics, leaping tall buildings, drop-kicking alien scumbags, chucking cars, and wielding such superpowers as telekinesis. "Grabbing one of the evil Zin invaders with the power of your mind and tossing it into a group of nearby enemies is like bowling with people," says senior producer Jim Boone, of developer Volition.

Wild weapons abound. Blast an enemy or vehicle with your freeze ray and watch it shatter with one punch or stray bullet. The Inflato-ray pumps up bad guys until they burst. And then you have the dubstep cannon. Pulling the trigger unleashes a sonic boom of the world's worst music, compelling enemies to dance to their graves, and beyond. "Even death can't stop people from moving to the sounds of the dubstep gun," Boone says.

**LEISURE SUIT LARRY: RELOADED****REPLAY GAMES (PC, IPHONE, IPAD, ANDROID)**

If you're not quite old enough to have sneaked a peek at your big brother's *Leisure Suit Larry* games back in the late eighties, here's your second chance with the soft-porn classic. Players guide Larry Laffer, the original 40-year-old virgin, on a point-and-click quest to finally score with a bona fide female. The tacky protagonist woos dive-bar hookers and disco sluts, trying to avoid catching a lethal STD along the way. The series was endearing for its industrial-strength innuendo, and now the creator is remaking the original with hand-drawn graphics and a Vegas-flavored musical score. More important, *Reloaded* has new dialogue and humor that means Larry doesn't sound like a relic from *Three's Company*.

NCAA FOOTBALL 14**EA SPORTS (XBOX 360, PS3)**

Brain-rattling hits, stiff-arm drives, tuck-and-runs, tackle recoveries—football's dirtiest tricks and most clever tactics come to life in EA's latest college football simulation, now revamped with a wince-worthy physics system and running-game improvements that make you fight for every yard. The presentation goes the whole nine yards, too, with a ramped-up pregame show and roughly 500 postplay vignettes. Handheld cameras capture the action from the field, while chatter from both the players and commentators is a lot livelier than in the past. New coaching skills—from recruiting to play calling—let you guide your dynasty's destiny all the way to a bowl game.

**FAR CRY 3: BLOOD DRAGON****UBISOFT (XBOX 360, PS3, PC)**

Anyone who grew up on eighties action flicks will feel right at home playing this totally radical spin-off of last year's sun-soaked shooter. Instead of continuing *Far Cry 3*'s psychedelic story, *Blood Dragon* delivers an original adventure set in 2007—as it was envisioned in 1984. You play Sergeant Rex Colt, a half-man/half-machine commando scouring a nuked-out neon wasteland to rescue his girl from killer cyborgs. You'll wield "futuristic" ray guns and other weapons not seen since Reagan-era sci-fi while ripping out the cybernetic hearts of your foes. Implant these organs into beasts and watch them do your bidding as they fire lasers from their eyes. It's all terribly cheesy and tremendously nostalgic, right down to the F-bomb-laden voice acting of *Terminator*'s Michael Biehn.

Comic Relief

Superheroes assemble in these power-packed games.

**Marvel Heroes****Gazillion Entertainment (PC, Mac)**

Suit up as the X-Men, Spider-Man, Captain America, and other Marvel men in tights to topple Doctor Doom in this multiplayer roleplaying game from the creator of the *Diablo* series. Best of all, it's free to play!

**Injustice: Gods Among Us****Warner Bros. Interactive (iPhone, iPad)**

Popular DC heroes and villains wallop one another—via swipes of the touch screen—in this mobile incarnation of the console battle royal. Victories unlock costumes and other extras in the console game.

**Deadpool****Activision (Xbox 360, PS3, PC)**

As Marvel Comics's mentally unstable mercenary, you'll perforate bad guys with bullets, blades, and bombs while using your own superhealing powers to reattach limbs lost in battle.

REVIEWS

LONG LIVE THE QUEENS

Queens of the Stone Age make a triumphant return with the dark, unflinching *Like Clockwork*, their first album in six years.

By John Bolster



Queens of the Stone Age
Like Clockwork
Matador

★★★½

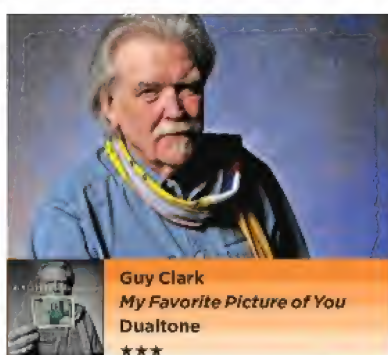
There are some ballyhooed guest appearances on this, the first Queens of the Stone Age album since 2007's *Era Vulgaris*—including one by Elton John, who Crocodile Rocks the piano and sings backup on the boisterous "Fairweather Friends." But the truth is, you might not notice the guest stars if you don't know about them in advance, because this is a QOTSA record through and through—and the best one since 2002's *Songs for the Deaf*. It's full of brooding, ambitious tracks whose three-dimensional atmospheres defy easy description. On the lurching, crescendoing "I Appear Missing," QOTSA mastermind Josh Homme coos about a "prisoner on the loose, description: spitting image of me," while on "I Sat by the Ocean" he asks, "Do you know who you really are/ Are you sure it's really you?" over a sun-baked guitar pattern. On "Smooth Sailing," one of the best and definitely the most fun track on the record, the sense of disillusionment gives way to gutbucket swagger, as Homme tosses off falsetto lines like, "Do the damage till the damage is done," over an unstoppable groove. Hopefully, we won't have to wait till 2019 for the next one.



Transplants
In a Warzone
Epitaph

★★½

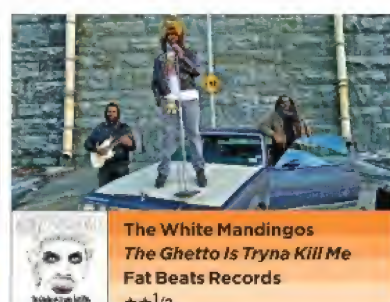
You don't come to a Transplants record for nuance and subtlety. You come for the pile-driving beats of drummer Travis Barker, the anthemic riffs of guitarist Tim Armstrong, and the Shane MacGowan-esque sneer of vocalist Rob Aston. On *In a Warzone*, their third album, the California punk-rap trio boils down their sound, shedding the excursions into reggae, dub, and funk of previous records, and churning out 12 songs in 30 minutes. Apart from the hip-hop steeped "Something's Different," which features guests Bun B, Equipto, and Paul Wall, and the electro-tinged "It's a Problem," the bulk of the album consists of lean punk-rock burners. There are some generic moments ("Gravestones and Burial Plots," "Exit the Wasteland"), but *Warzone* delivers enough to keep fans interested, and hoping the band—a side project for Barker (Blink 182) and Armstrong (Rancid)—keeps it going.



Guy Clark
My Favorite Picture of You
Dualtone

★★★

A Texas legend, Clark was a friend of Townes Van Zandt and a mentor to Steve Earle. His songs have been recorded by dozens of artists, including Johnny Cash, Jimmy Buffett, and Ricky Skaggs. He's released 24 records, but this is his first studio album in four years, and it follows the death of Susanna, his wife of 40 years, in 2012. The picture mentioned in the title is a decades-old Polaroid of Susanna, standing outside a house, ripshit that her husband and Van Zandt are inside, "just drunk on our asses, jerks," as Clark recalls. And the title track is a typically expert Clark gem, plainspoken and eloquent, accented with cello and Bryn Davies's harmony vocals. From "Cornmeal Waltz," a nostalgic slice of Texas dance-hall life, to "I'll Show Me," a wry portrait of self-destruction, this record glides through one masterly song after another.



The White Mandingos
The Ghetto Is Tryna Kill Me
Fat Beats Records

★★½

An intriguing collaboration among Bad Brains bassist Darryl Jenifer, West Coast rapper Murs, and hip-hop journalist Sacha Jenkins, the White Mandingos may not bowl you over with their music—a solid, eighties-influenced mix of punk and rap—but they should get your attention with their lyrics. *The Ghetto Is Tryna Kill Me* is a concept album about "Tyrone White," frontman for a Harlem-based rock band, who speaks for "the white black boys, and the black white girls," as Murs sings on the defiant "Black-N-White." Exploring a life lived in the borderlands of racial identity, *Ghetto* delivers an interesting perspective, and plenty of memorable lines, including the following from the elegiac "My First White Girl": "We'd get drunk off a ton of liquor/ I'd say 'you white bitch' and she'd cum quicker/ She told me don't believe the white lies/ My dick was no bigger than a white guy's."

GETTING THEIR LICKS IN

Five artists who manage to be guitar heroes without being tired clichés.



Artist: Josh Homme

Bands: Queens of the Stone Age, Them Crooked Vultures, Eagles of Death Metal

Style: Desert rock, robot rock, stoner rock, alternative, metal, hard rock, psychedelic

Righteous riffage: "Sick, Sick, Sick" from QOTSA's 2007 *Era Vulgaris*—bludgeoning intensity. "Regular John" from QOTSA's 1998 self-titled debut—a template-setter.



Artist: Greg Ginn

Bands: Black Flag, Gone, many others

Style: Hardcore, metal

Righteous riffage: "Rise Above" from Black Flag's 1981 *Damaged* is raw and filthy.



Artist: Tom Morello

Bands: Rage Against the Machine, Audioslave

Style: Rap-rock, hard rock
Righteous riffage: "Bulls on Parade" from RATM's 1996 *Evil Empire*. That's a guitar, not a deejay scratching a record.



Artist: D. Boon

Band: Minutemen

Style: Punk, jazz-punk, alternative, post-punk

Righteous riffage: "Two Beads at the End," "Shit From an Old Notebook," from 1984's *Double Nickels on the Dime*. He's a master of concise pyrotechnics.



Artist: Jeff "Skunk" Baxter

Bands: Steely Dan, the Doobie Brothers, session work

Style: Jazz-rock, pop

Righteous riffage: "My Old School" from Steely Dan's *Countdown to Ecstasy* (1973). His staccato solo will give you goose bumps. "Hot Stuff" from Donna Summer's *Bad Girls* (1979). Doubt it? Google it.

UNCOVERED

Remakes that shed new light on the originals.

Artist:
Rage Against the Machine

Song: "Maggie's Farm"

Original artist: Bob Dylan

How it's different: They made it a booming rap-rock song, putting the lyrics front and center.

What it shows: Dylan's scathing critique, making lines like "She talks to all the servants about man and God and law" really pop.

Artist:
Johnny Cash

Song: "Hurt"

Original artist: Nine Inch Nails

How it's different: Cash didn't change the song that much, but anytime the Man in Black sang a song, it pretty much became his.

What it shows: "How powerful music is as a medium and art form," according to NIN frontman Trent Reznor, who also said that Cash's version made his eyes well up.

Artist:
Punch Brothers

Song: "Just What I Needed"

Original artist: The Cars

How it's different: The hypertalented neo-bluegrass band performed the song acoustically on mandolin, banjo, guitar, fiddle, and stand-up bass.

What it shows: The song's clever, awesome arrangement.

Artist:
The White Mandingos

Song: "Guilty of Being White"

Original artist: Minor Threat
How it's different: It's slower and heavier, and it takes the original's last lyric and puts it first. Also: three black artists performing the song kinda flips the script.


What it shows: The White Mandingos have a sense of irony, and that Minor Threat frontman Ian MacKaye's teenage grievance (he was a minority at his public school) may have been a little misguided, in the big picture.

Artist:
Nirvana

Song: "Where Did You Sleep Last Night"

Original artist: Traditional; first made famous by Leadbelly

How it's different: More instrumentation, including cello, and Kurt Cobain's dig-deep finale.

What it shows: Mainly, that Cobain was for real—and that the song, at heart, is a scary, psychotic blues. 

SELF-EXPOSURE

Marie Calloway talks about *What Purpose Did I Serve in Your Life*, her shocking, enigmatic collection of stories and collages based on her own sexual experiences.

The number-one threat to women on this planet, as comedian Louis C.K. pointed out earlier this year, is ... the mayhem visited upon them by men. This past spring, the Pentagon reported an estimated 26,000 sexual assaults in the armed forces in 2012, up from 19,000 in 2010. In a 2011 government survey, nearly one in five women said they had been raped or had experienced an attempted rape.

Taken in the context of this hormonal firestorm, 23-year-old pseudonymous blogger Marie Calloway's stories are a splash of kerosene. Her sexually explicit sketches, based on her own risky life experiences, deal in masochism, anomie, and power dynamics between the sexes. Her first published piece, "Adrien Brody," describes a tryst with a much older New York editor, whom she renamed after the Hollywood actor. In "Thank U for Touching Me," she recounts a threesome with two guys in skillfully ambiguous terms, and other stories detail her experiences as a sex worker and a literary ingenue. There are also graphic collages—screen captures from provocative Facebook exchanges, and other mixed-media elements.

Calloway spoke to *Penthouse* about her radical sexual tastes, the polarized reactions to her work, and her interest in extremes.

Your main character talks about wanting to someday write a story that will be "incomprehensible to men." What do women perceive in your stories now that men don't?

Generally when straight men read my book, they perceive it as much more sexual than women do. Obviously there's a lot of sex, but women understand that the sex is just a way to convey, like, emotions and power dynamics, rather than being pornographic.

There's a lot of sex in the book, but there aren't very many orgasms, especially for the main character.

No, there aren't. I think that's another thing: Men place a lot more emphasis on orgasms than women do. I've talked to men about not orgasming during sex, and they say, "I don't understand. What's the point of having sex if you don't have an orgasm?" It's

something that I'm interested in. I've been reading a lot of feminist texts about PIV, which is penis-in-vagina sex, and how it's seen as the ultimate sex act—like that's what sex is. But a lot of women can't come from it, and a lot of women don't even really enjoy it.

Your stories have received both high praise and harsh criticism, some of which you've superimposed over pictures of yourself in the book. Is criticism more painful than praise is gratifying to you?

I think back then—yeah. When I was writing a lot about the criticism, it was very painful, because I had never had people read or comment on my writing before. To go from [that], to suddenly being thrown into the middle of what seemed like the whole internet writing and talking about it, was very shocking. Also, I think it's just natural: You could get a bunch of praise but the one critical thing is what you're going to focus on. But now I'm at a point where I don't really care.

I think one reason your stories anger or offend people is because the main character is often passive. I think in real life, people have no problem with a woman who sleeps around as long as it's her choice—

Yeah, definitely. There are a lot of, like, sex-positive feminists who really dislike my writing because of that element. And I think it's admirable that they want women to have sex and have good sex and be in control—but I feel like life is often messier than that, especially when you're young. I've gotten so many responses from girls around my age—late teens and twenties—who say, "This is the first time I've read a book that I can actually relate to, because the empowering sex books just aren't how my life is."

The story "Thank U for Touching Me" walks a fine line concerning the character's mixed feelings about engaging in a threesome.

It's interesting to read responses to that story, because some people took it like the boys had taken advantage of me, and I think I tried to convey that there was an element of that, but also—I let them. So ... it's complicated. When that was happening, I wasn't really thinking, *I'm being hurt and I wish this would stop*. It was more like, *This is really weird and kind of scary*, but I couldn't stop because it was so exciting. It's kind of like if you were to watch a horror movie and part of you really wants to stop, but you can't because it's so engaging, and you want to know what happens [laughs].

Near the end of that story, the main character gets angry that one of the guys gets off on her getting off. That seemed odd, because what's wrong with "you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours"?

It just feels like someone using you, in a dishonest way.

Really?

Yeah, think of, like, a creepy guy at a party offering to give you a back massage—like he's doing you a favor, but really it's just him like, you know ...

I guess when you put it like that ...
It's hard to explain. I think it also has



to do with my sexuality. I'm really into guys being dominant and kind of just doing what they want. If I know they're just doing it because I like it, then it's not sexy anymore to me.

Because it seems disingenuous?

Yeah.

Speaking of disingenuous, there's a scene in "Adrien Brody" where the editor comes on the narrator's face, and then tells her how vulnerable he feels. Did you want the reader to want to punch him in the face at that moment? He's pretty much the opposite of "vulnerable" right then.

I can see how you would think that, and I kind of feel like that, now. But when it was happening, I thought it was interesting, the way a guy could feel vulnerable and weird doing that. It wasn't something I had ever considered before. A lot of sensitive, intellectual dudes have weird hang-ups about porn and sex, and so he felt weird doing, like, a porn thing, basically.

There were times in your Facebook exchanges when I got the feeling that you were goading guys into their worst selves, or most extreme selves. Was there an element of that?

I think so. I wouldn't put it as trying to make someone "bad," but I was definitely interested in getting to an intimate, vulnerable part of someone, and I'm pretty obsessed with male-female power dynamics—especially men who are into hurting women, or dominating them. So I tried to kind of pull that out of people.

Was there also a sense of defiance? Like, "Fuck you, I'll be even more extreme than you"?

Ummm...

No?

Well, when a lot these stories were taking place, I was kind of depressed, and when you're depressed, you feel apathetic and numb a lot. So I would put myself into extreme situations because I was looking for some kind of feeling, to create an emotional response. And also, when I was younger, I had a problem with extremes. I saw life as, like, you either stay in your room on your computer all day or you do something really extreme and crazy. I couldn't, like, live in the ... middle [*laughs*].

When They're Gone, They're GONE

SOLD OUT
four years
in a row!

**JUST RELEASED: This new
China Silver Panda is a
first-ever—and it's going fast!**

Each year, when China releases its Silver Panda coin, millions of collectors and silver lovers around the world swarm the market for these red-hot silver beauties. But even though the China Mint has raised their mintages from 600,000 to 8 million in recent years, the China Silver Pandas have still sold out each and every year. *Why?* The answer is surprisingly simple.

The Chinese silver rush is on!

The China Silver Panda has been one of the world's most popular coins for the last thirty years. But remarkably, an old 1949 law prohibited Chinese citizens from owning these coins until the law was changed in 2004. When the law was finally changed, millions of China's prosperous new middle class buyers flooded into the market. The Chinese silver rush is on!

A first-ever Panda trio

When China unveiled the new 2013 Silver Panda, it also revealed an exciting surprise. For the first time in its thirty-year history, the coin's design features *three* Pandas—an important fact for collectors of the series. Do the three Pandas shown on the coin symbolize the three decades of the China Silver Panda series? Many collectors say "yes"—and this 'first ever' milestone could easily help drive demand for this year's coin even higher!

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WORK HARD, PLAY HARDER

Chevy's Silverado gets ripped, yet embraces the luxury lifestyle.

By Bill Heald



To follow the history of the American full-size pickup is to journey from the roughest work site to the finest five-star restaurant. What started out as a farm implement has evolved into a true James Bond vehicle in terms of the balance between job performance and sophistication, and the iconic Chevy pickup has always been a player in this interesting transformation. To say the modern truck has to do everything well is now an understatement, and GM has done a full "hood to hitch" overhaul of the Chevy Silverado 1500 (and its near twin, the GMC Sierra 1500) to keep it at the cutting edge. This is the kind of serious change that the engineers have taken on with the knowledge that, as the company's best-selling vehicle, they have to address the previous design's shortcomings while sharpening and increasing the attributes that have made the truck so successful. As a result, the new Silverado is more capable and fuel-efficient than ever before, but also refined to the point that it has luxury-car levels of class when you select the top trim options. It also features the latest in infotainment technology, so you literally sacrifice nothing when the workday is done and you head downtown for some high-class relaxation.

One thing pickups have had over cars is a huge assortment of configuration options to tailor your ride exactly to your needs. This starts with the cab, which includes a standard two-door and two four-door variants (double cab and crew cab). The popularity of four-door models is ramping up thanks to their versatility, and following in the wheel tracks of RAM and Toyota Tundra pickups, the double-cab Silverado now has conventional rear doors instead of the rear-hinged units that marred the previous model. This means you don't have to open the front door before you can open the rear door, which was a pain. The new crew cab is roomier than ever before, meaning you can transport several exotic dancers comfortably to their next gig while hauling their poles and other props in the bed out back (and multiple bed lengths are offered).

The robust, fully boxed frame is now even stronger than previous models, and has special mounts to further isolate the cab from vibration, whether you're encountering rural rocks or urban potholes. Three new EcoTec3 engines are offered, engineered to improve efficiency by enabling them to operate in four-cylinder mode when possible, thus saving precious fuel. These are specifically tuned to provide the horsepower and low-end muscle trucks need. The lineup includes a stout 4.3-liter V-6 that is the most frugal of the bunch, but strong enough to power the larger crew-cab model and/or pull a trailer. Next there's an updated version of the ever-popular 5.3-liter V-8, with added power and torque over the previous model, and finally a brawny 6.2-liter V-8 that's an all-new design that Chevy claims is "engineered to be the most capable engine in any light-duty pickup." All three



engines get a six-speed automatic transmission that includes auto grade braking, which downshifts when you're on long downhill stretches to reduce brake wear and help keep your speed under control (especially when carrying a heavy load). Standard four-wheel disc brakes feature GM's Duralife rotors with a hardened surface that resists rusting, potentially doubling their life and lowering maintenance costs.

All this durable construction is largely unseen as it operates, but what is conspicuous is how polished and accommodating the new interiors are. Everything a tech lover demands is integrated into the vehicle's electronics when you select the appropriate option packages, and driver controls are designed to not only be close at hand but also easy to operate while wearing gloves (whether the work variety or part of your formal wear). This really expresses the dual personality of these kick-ass trucks. The Silverado has never been more rugged, yet more urbane, in its long, impressive history. **OTW**

Silverado 1500 crew cab 5.3 two-wheel drive

Body style	Four-door pickup
Engine	5.3-liter EcoTec3 V-8
Power	355 horsepower
Torque	383 foot-pounds
Transmission	Six-speed automatic
Front tires	265/65 R18
Rear tires	265/65 R18
Curb weight	5,042 pounds

PERFORMANCE

Maximum towing	8,600 pounds (11,500 pounds with Max Towing Package)
Maximum payload	2,102 pounds
Fuel	26-gallon capacity
EPA mpg	16 city/23 highway
Base price	\$32,710





FUGITIVE -----FROM----- MILWAUKEE

The CVO Breakout shows why Harley-Davidson still rules.

By Bill Heald



When you're such a successful icon that all your fiercest competitors try to outdo you at your own game, you forever have to show the world why the other guys are always copying your products. Harley-Davidson has been meeting this challenge during more than a century of operation by continuing to build stylish, evocative motorcycles, and is still one of the most recognized (and desired) brands in the world. The new CVO Breakout is a great example of how the company continues to improve the overall package while pushing the design envelope in wild new directions. It manages to do this while maintaining a signature look that still identifies a motorcycle as a Harley, and incorporating the latest in performance technology.

Part of the Softail line (meaning the rear suspension is hidden from view), the CVO Breakout is a limited-production Special Edition from the Custom Vehicle Operations division. The long, low custom is sculpted around one of the Motor Company's finest engines, the Twin Cam 110B V-twin. This huge, torque-rich, air-cooled mill features counter-balancers to smooth vibration because it's rigidly mounted in the frame to reinforce overall chassis strength. Electronic Sequential Port Fuel Injection provides immediate throttle response, and as the company says, when you crack open the throttle, "the Breakout will be long gone, along with its rider's inhibitions." That's nearly as appealing as light speed, and nothing sounds like a big twin when you screw it on.

Next to the appeal of the motor, you have the visual allure of a scooter-crushing 240-series rear tire that is stylistically balanced in classic chopper fashion by a set of long, raked front forks, and a comparatively skinny 21-inch front tire. Chopped front and rear fenders and a flat, drag-style handlebar complete the boulevard badass basics, and the riding position is laid-back but still upright enough to be comfortable. The transmission is a six-speed Cruise Drive unit with Harley's clean, low-

SPECIFICATIONS

Engine type	Air-cooled V-twin
Bore x stroke	101.6mm x 111.1mm
Displacement	1,802 cc
Fuel system	Electronic Sequential Port Fuel Injection
Ignition	Electronic
Transmission	Six-speed cruise drive
Front suspension	49mm telescopic forks
Rear suspension	Hidden, horizontally mounted shocks
Front brake	Single 292mm disc, ABS
Rear brake	Single 292mm disc, ABS
Front tire	130/60 B21
Rear tire	240/40 R18
Fuel tank	Five-gallon capacity
Wheelbase	67.3 inches
Seat height	24.8 inches
Curb weight	728 pounds
Base price	\$26,499

maintenance belt drive. This splendid drivetrain, along with a generous five-gallon fuel capacity and electronic cruise control, ensures long days on the road are purely up to the whims of the rider (and passenger). The single front and rear disc brakes are enhanced with standard ABS, a true bacon-saver in panic-stop situations, especially in the rain.

A "regular" edition of the Breakout is also available, and has its own dedicated detail work, including unique drag-style wheels, and is powered by a smaller 103B Twin Cam engine. But we like the CVO version because of its extensive list of standard goodies (like those ABS brakes and cruise control) as well as a low production number (less than 2,000 units) that will ensure exclusivity. Harley also offers three stunning paint schemes that help make the CVO Breakout a true factory custom, with the kind of attention to detail that's displayed by only the finest show bikes. Once you encounter a bike like the Breakout, you understand why Harleys are still some of the most coveted rides in the world. 



NECESSARY TOUGHNESS

Badass tech you never knew you needed.

By Crispin Boyer

■ HAPIforksmartfork

HAPILABS • \$99

A "smart fork" might sound, well, forking stupid in a roundup of tough tech, but don't be so quick to dis the HAPIfork. This high-tech utensil delivers a dose of tough love to overeaters, letting them know when they're pigging out. The handle vibrates and flashes LED lights to help masticators parcel out proper "fork servings" per minute. By chewing at a slower pace, you'll feel full faster and eat less overall (you'll also cut down on bellyaches). A built-in USB port syncs the fork with a diet-coaching app that plans out meals and keeps tabs on the progress of HAPIfork-wielding friends, turning weight loss into a competitive sport.



■ Soloshot tripod

Soloshot, Inc. • \$479

It's no secret the camera adds ten pounds of intestinal fortitude to action-sports fanatics, emboldening them to go faster, leap higher, and perform better. But wearable cams only capture the action in shaky bursts from the athlete's perspective. To get the complete picture, you need a dedicated cameraman—or this motorized tripod. The rechargeable system is composed of two pieces: a rugged tripod that will lock to your camera of choice, and a waterproof wearable transmitter with a range of 2,000 feet. Leave the tripod on the beach, mountain, or curb, and it will automatically track the action while you surf, snowboard, or zoom around the track. An ultrabright LED on the Soloshot's face lets you know the camera is following you every move.



■ Galaxy S4 smartphone

Samsung • \$200 with a two-year contract

Expectations are high for the Galaxy S4, the follow-up to 2012's smash-hit smartphone. And for the most part, it delivers. Although the S4's 4.99-inch super AMOLED screen is just a hair larger than its predecessor's, the display packs more pixels per inch for vivid browsing and media playback. Eye-tracking and voice-activation tricks from last year have been refined and complemented by a host of novel features, including a gimmicky gesture-recognition app, health-monitoring software, and a host of new modes and effects for the 13-megapixel camera. The plastic casing might feel a little flimsy, but the Gorilla Glass screen can take a real beating.





■ Grillbot grill cleaner

Grillbot, LLC • \$100

It might sound like a burger-broiling android or some flame-throwing hibachi from the next Michael Bay flick (actually, that would be Optimus Prime Rib), but the rechargeable Grillbot is more like a Roomba for your grill. Just set it on the grates, press the activation button, and close the lid. Three brass brushes scour away grease and charred meat in five to seven minutes without scratching your grates' coating. It's a tough little robot, too—able to clean hot grills, up to 250 degrees. Pop off the brushes and toss them in the dishwasher to complete your post-cookout cleanup.

■ M-100 Crossfade headphones

V-Moda • \$310

These are serious over-the-ear headphones with a serious price for serious audiophiles that were designed by a think tank of (you guessed it) serious audiophiles, music producers, and deejays. They're crafted from steel and various alloys, so they can survive both repeated drops on the sidewalk and being crushed at the bottom of your backpack. Even the cables and plugs are reinforced with Kevlar to withstand tangling. The sound lives up to the build quality, delivering crisp mid- and high-range reproduction along with bass that's clean without being overpowering. An optional \$15 mike means you can keep the M-100s plugged in while you're answering calls.



■ M801d 80-inch RazorLED smart TV

Vizio • \$4,500

Consumer-tech titan Vizio is known for making high-definition TVs that are more budget-friendly than badass, but the new M-series will add edge to the company's image. The 80-inch model is the flagship of the line. An advanced dimming system makes for a more vivid display in any light, and the 240-hertz refresh rate is perfect for both gaming and watching the big game. Four pairs of passive glasses allow you to take advantage of the bright, flicker-free 3-D mode. But the most eye-catching feature is its design. The screen's bezel is slim to the point of invisibility, giving the impression of an edge-to-edge display. Despite all these features and a tough metal base, the M801d still boasts a budget price compared to competing models.



■ Yaba X surface speaker

PLX Devices • \$70

Here's proof that big sound comes in pocket-friendly packages. The Yaba X is just under three inches across, but it pumps out the room-rattling volume of speakers ten times its size, thanks to its ability to convert any surface into a wall of sound. Its tiny 2.4-watt class-G amplifier is housed in a tough zinc shell that conducts sound through anything you rest it on: tables, counters, books—the bigger the surface, the bigger the sound. Just plug in any music player via the standard 3.5mm audio jack. (It also makes an ideal portable amplifier for musicians.) Three rechargeable lithium batteries deliver up to eight hours of playing time on a single charge.



TAKE A FLYING LEAP

Our twenty-first-century rogue tells you how to deal with a girlfriend who's a bigger badass than you are.


Illustration by Celia Calle

My girlfriend and I are celebrating our third anniversary this summer. As a present for me, she planned a weekend trip to go skydiving. We talked about doing it together when we first met, and she says that we finally have the time and money to make it a reality. She's told all our friends, our families, and anyone else who'll listen about our upcoming skydiving adventure.

The problem? I'm scared shitless. I've been dreading it since she told me she booked the jump. Back when we met, when she said she thought it would be a cool thing to do, there was no way I was going to tell her I was terrified by the idea. We talked about it being kind of expensive, and I just hoped it would never come up again. Now I've got two options: (1) tell her I'm scared, back out now, and make up an excuse to everyone she's told. Or (2) back out the day of the jump with some lie about hurting my back or leg or something. Do I cancel now or bail the day of the jump?

You forgot to mention option No. 3: telling the world you're a pussy in a national men's magazine.

You are in deep shit, aren't you? You talked a big game, and got your girlfriend all excited about sharing a meaningful experience. You know how much chicks are into that. Now you're going to take that away? Why don't you follow up by giving her an empty ring box and pretending to propose, and then punch her grandmother in the face?

There's no way you're backing out of this without looking like a world-class shithead. According to my research, about 350,000 people go skydiving each year, and the estimated number of jumps is around three million. You know how many people bit it last year from skydiving? Only 49. Those are pretty good stats. Just do it. Make the jump. The problem is, you're letting your mind take over the situation. You've got to flip the script and convince yourself that jumping out of a plane is something you can, and will, do. Read books about confidence. Talk to professionals who skydive for a living and regular people who haven't vagina-ed out. If you do enough research, you can talk yourself into the jump as easily as you talked yourself out of it. 



THE RETURN OF AMERICAN MADE RUM

Craft distillers around the country are resurrecting America's original spirit.

By Nicholas Gill



What's the quintessential American spirit? Some say it's bourbon, though the Irish and Scots were mastering whiskey long before Columbus set sail.

Rum, on the other hand, is woven into the very fabric of the founding of this country. "Rum," as cocktail historian Wayne Curtis writes in *And a Bottle of Rum: A History of the New World in Ten Cocktails*, "is the history of America in a glass."

The American Colonies traded everything they could to get their booze-soaked hands on molasses from the West Indies, which fueled an estimated 140 rum distilleries along the East Coast at one point. When the Brits enacted the Sugar Act in 1764, the colonists organized and the movement helped give birth to the American Revolution. After independence, trade with the British Isles, including access to molasses, was cut off, leading most distilleries to turn to grain, ushering in the whiskey era. Whatever rum was left kicked the bucket by Prohibition.

Now rum distillation, which for two centuries has been dominated by a handful of Caribbean nations, is on the upswing on the mainland. While a little more than a decade ago you could count every American distillery producing rum on one hand, there are now more than a hundred. A handful of small distilleries are even producing small-batch rums that rival the world's best.

"I think vodka is done. People are over it," says Bridget Firtle, a former financial analyst who founded her distillery, the Noble Experiment, in 2012 in Bushwick, Brooklyn. "This was America's first spirit and it was superimportant to us. It doesn't need to be something tropical and fruity. You can make something a bit edgier."

Firtle's product is Owney's NYC Rum, an unaged white rum named after a Prohibition-era mobster and bootlegger and made from Southern sugarcane. Owney's has an earthy flavor that's reminiscent of a *rhum agricole* (a time-consuming, labor-intensive rum more commonly found in the French Caribbean), but dry on the palate. It's good

on the rocks, but Firtle says, "Nothing beats a perfect Daiquiri."

In Western Massachusetts, Berkshire Mountain Distillers' Ragged Mountain Rum, distilled with spring water from the edge of the Appalachian Trail, was a Double Gold Medal winner at the San Francisco World Spirits Competition. It's medium-bodied and not as sweet as most of the dark rums on the market now. Aged in American Oak bourbon barrels, it has the smokiness you'd normally associate with whiskey, but the burnt-sugar and spice qualities you expect from rum.

The Bay Area's St. George Spirits distillery produces Agua Libre Pure Cane Rum, a type of *rhum agricole*. Rather than molasses, the process uses freshly squeezed sugarcane juice, in this case from California's Imperial Valley. "I don't know how much market there is in the United States for *rhum agricole*, but it's growing," says Lance Winters, St. George's master distiller.

The übergrassy rum is unlike anything that is currently being produced in the States. The aromas are more complex and earthier, unlike molasses-based rums that tend to be sweeter. It has a *terroir* that you just can't get out of a bottle of Bacardi. "We're using a still built for *eau de vive*, which is designed to capture the intensity of flavors," says Winters. Purists drink it straight, but it will certainly liven up any Hemingway Daiquiri or Piña Colada.

In Newport, Oregon, Rogue Spirits, an offshoot of Rogue Ales, uses handcrafted, copper pot stills to produce a variety of small-batch liquors, including two rums. The dark rum is made from pure Hawaiian sugarcane and aged in charcoal-oak bourbon barrels straight from the Jack Daniels Distillery. While the craft-cocktail crowd usually turns up its nose at spiced rums, Rogue's Hazelnut Spice Rum has garnered attention. The medium-bodied rum, made with toasted Oregon hazelnuts, is surprisingly versatile and comes complete with a bourbony finish. We'll "yo, ho, ho" to that. 

JUMP IN THE LINE

From Rogue mixologist Tony Gurdian

INGREDIENTS

2 ounces Rogue Dark Rum
1/2 ounce Becherovka
3/4 ounce fresh lime
3/4 ounce ginger syrup (recipe below)

Combine all ingredients in a shaker. Shake and strain over crushed ice. Float Angostura bitters. Garnish with a cinnamon stick and a slice of lime.

Ginger syrup

4 ounces raw ginger juice
4 ounces water
16 ounces sugar

Heat ingredients in a pot on the stove until the sugar melts. Let it cool. Makes about 12 ounces.

a pleasing tease

Twenty-one-year-old Anneli knows a sexy striptease is a surefire way to capture our attention. Not that the luminous 34-24-33 blonde had to work for it....

Photographs by Davide Esposito







"I'm not one for telling a guy flat-out what I want. I like for men to make the first move. Or I ask him to come over for coffee."



"People don't believe this, but normally I'm very shy. Taking off my clothes in front of the camera for the first time was incredibly daring for me!"







"Of course, I'm used to nude photo shoots now. If asked to describe myself, I say I'm a little bit of a freak, and I mean that in the very best way."







"I love working as a model, but I've also trained to be a hairstylist. I hope to do that someday, too. I love to bring out the best in other girls."

SEE MORE OF ANNELI AT PENTHOUSE.COM.



DO DARS COMPANY

It's time for our annual review of the ass-kicking, name-taking renegades who make this country great. As usual, we also celebrate an exceptional group of everyday heroes who make us proud to call ourselves Americans.

By Kara Wahlgren and Barbara Rice Thompson



Disaster Relief

This past year saw horrific disasters, both natural and man-made. There are plenty of accolades to go around, starting with:

HURRICANE/SUPERSTORM SANDY

News broadcasts seem to come up with some type of apocalypse joke for every storm they predict, but this one lived up to the hype—in deadly fashion. Evacuations saved countless lives, but we loved the stories about people being rescued by the **New York Scuba Team** or on a surfboard by **Dylan Smith**, who, sadly, died soon after while surfing in Puerto Rico. The tale of **Artur Kasprzak**—who saved seven members of the same family as their basement flooded, but was unable to get out himself—was particularly heartbreaking.

Politicians rarely make this list, but Newark Mayor **Cory Booker** earned our respect by ensuring that that city's homeless population was taken care of during the storm, and New Jersey Governor **Chris Christie** did a hell of a job breaking loose of partisan politics—just days before the presidential election—to ensure that his battered state got the funds and assistance its citizens required.

Thousands of volunteers came together under the umbrella of **Occupy Sandy** and offered immediate help and pulled together long-term aid, some of it using the still-somewhat-new fund-raising tools of Facebook and Twitter. The group also came up with the unprecedented emergency-relief idea of using an Amazon gift registry, setting up a list of needed goods within days and raising more than \$750,000 since early November.

Burners Without Borders, a group that started when Burning Man participants went from the desert to New Orleans to help with cleanup after Hurricane Katrina, has been providing disaster assistance around the world since. Volunteers headed to Union Beach, New Jersey—after being invited by the town's mayor—and so far they've provided \$2 million worth of demolition work for homeowners who can't access emergency funds until their homes have been cleared away.

THE CREWS OF RESCUE HELICOPTERS CG6012 AND CG6031

United States Coast Guard, Air Station Elizabeth City

When the HMS *Bounty*, a 180-foot three-masted replica of the infamous sailboat from *Mutiny on the Bounty*, was caught 90 miles off the coast of Hatteras, North Carolina, during Hurricane Sandy, the pilots and rescue swimmers of Coast Guard rescue helicopters CG6012 and CG6031 were dispatched to save the crew. Braving 60-knot, hurricane-force winds and 30-foot waves, these daring helicopter pilots flew straight into the middle of the devastating storm, braving heavy rain and winds with the only visibility being provided by their night-vision goggles. As massive waves pounded the *Bounty's* lifeboats, rescue swimmers dove into the ocean, strapping the terrified crew to harnesses and winching them into the rescue choppers. Despite the deadly conditions, the Coast Guard crews managed to rescue 14 of the 16 members of the capsized sailboat.—Ben Thompson



BOSTON MARATHON BOMBING

When another terrorist attack hit an American city, killing three, wounding 264, and resulting in more than a dozen people requiring amputations, reaction was swift and predictable. But the FBI and the Boston Police Department did a tremendous job of keeping the city safe while they investigated, and the suspects were identified, hunted down, and in custody (or dead) only five days later. This is another situation where there are too many people to honor, but we would like to single out **Jeff Bauman**, who identified one of the suspects immediately upon waking up in the hospital after losing both legs below the knee, and **Carlos Arredondo**, now forever known as “the guy in the cowboy hat,” who saved Bauman’s life.

A SPECIAL SHOUTOUT TO:

First responders. We’ve always held them in high esteem, but in the past year we’ve been shown time and again the myriad difficulties and responsibilities of their jobs, whether they’re police officers and EMTs dealing with a horrific crime scene after a mass murder, search-and-rescue workers digging through debris after a devastating tornado cuts a swath across a county, volunteer firefighters dying as they tried to save their town after a fertilizer plant exploded, or a police department that efficiently and safely tracked down the young men responsible for mindless carnage as a city, and nation, mourned.

SANDY HOOK ELEMENTARY

Let’s pay tribute to the women who died trying to save others’ lives. These are exactly the type of self-sacrificing people we hope our children meet when we send them off to school. Principal **Dawn Hochsprung** and school psychologist **Mary Sherlach** were both killed when they warned colleagues of Adam Lanza’s presence in the building, not to mention alerting the entire school via the announcement system. Substitute teacher **Lauren Rousseau** was killed, along with all but one of her first-grade students, as she tried to hide the kids in the bathroom. First-grade teacher **Victoria Leigh Soto** saved five of her students by concealing them in a closet, and several more by putting herself between Lanza and children who ran when the shooter fired on kids hiding under desks. Special-needs teacher’s aide **Anne Marie Murphy** and teacher’s aide **Rachel D’Avino** also died while protecting students.



Everyday Heroes

Every year we end up with at least one person on this list who saved someone from being hit by a subway train. This year we found two. We also found a few average Joes who came to the assistance of the next generation.

TRACK STARS

Elevated train stations can be just as hazardous as the subway. Fortunately, **Delroy Simmonds** happened to be nearby when a strong gust of wind blew a nine-month-old baby in a stroller off the edge of a Brooklyn platform. The mother, who had been tending to her other children and had neglected to set the brake, froze, but Simmonds jumped onto the tracks, then lifted the stroller and baby back up onto the platform. He managed to climb up just seconds before the train came to a screeching halt not far from where the stroller had fallen. Simmonds, who'd been unemployed for more than a year, missed a job interview that morning, but once the story of his daring rescue became known, he was offered a job at Kennedy International Airport.

There's "doing the right thing," and then there's risking life and limb for a complete stranger. When **Christopher Knafelc** saw a man stumble off a subway platform in Philadelphia, he didn't hesitate to jump to the man's aid. While keeping the man's head and neck stable, he instructed onlookers to notify subway personnel to stop the trains. Knafelc has battled substance abuse and had run-ins with the police, but he's been sober for three years, thanks to rehab and family support. His take on his selfless act? Just paying it forward. —*Deirdre Goldbeck*

CAUGHT IN THE ACT

Seattle garbage-truck driver **Jeff Blackburn** blocked traffic and saved a baby in a stroller that was rolling downhill from being hit by a FedEx truck. **Steve St. Bernard**, a New York City bus driver, caught a seven-year-old autistic girl who fell three stories from a Brooklyn building.

INTERNATIONAL GUEST STARS

When Canadian **Darrell Krushelnicki** saw a speeding car heading toward an intersection where a group of children were crossing the street, he turned his Hummer into a roadblock, pulling out in front of the driver and stopping his car before he could plow down the kids. We'll bet nobody makes jokes to him anymore about his gas-guzzler.

This may be our favorite entry on this entire list. A 56-year-old grandmother in southern Russia, **Aishat Maksudova**, fought off and killed a wolf that was attacking her. While the wolf hung off her arm by its teeth, Maksudova hit it in the head with her ax. She didn't save a kid, but there's no denying she's a tough-ass broad.



Poland's school-bus funeral procession

A SPECIAL SHOUTOUT TO:

School-bus driver **Charles Albert Poland Jr.**, who was killed when he tried to stop antigovernment "survivalist" **Jimmy Lee Dykes** from taking two children off his bus. By putting himself in front of Dykes and opening the rear emergency door, Poland, a Vietnam vet, saved 21 children. The five-year-old Dykes kidnapped was held hostage for several days, but was rescued unharmed.

Sporting America

It's been a hell of a year in sports, both on and off the court. Where to begin?

A QUICK OVERVIEW

Michael Phelps ended his Olympic swimming career with another incredible series of races, establishing himself as the most prolific medal-winner of all time. **LeBron James** finally delivered on his potential and won his first NBA title—but he's not even the biggest story in pro basketball. **Jason Collins**'s coming-out splash in April, which eclipsed that of pro soccer player **Robbie Rogers**, is likely to cause ripples through all of pro sports. The **Baltimore Orioles** went from the bottom of the heap to World Series champs, bringing joy to legions of success-starved fans. The other big local team, the Washington Redskins, was led to the playoffs by rookie quarterback **Robert Griffin III**, although his incredible first season ended with a major knee injury.



CHRISTMAS ABBOTT

The most grueling spot on a NASCAR track isn't behind the wheel—it's in the pits, where crews throw around 90-pound fuel cans and 60-pound racing tires with seconds on the clock. (Screw up once and you're fired, so, you know, no pressure.) Until now, no woman has taken on that job, and if you tried to imagine the kind of woman who would finally cross that gender gap, you probably wouldn't expect her to be petite and drop-dead gorgeous. But **Abbott** is all that—and a hell of a lot tougher than she looks. She spent three years washing fatigues in an Iraqi war zone. She opened her own CrossFit gym, where she was known for her ripped abs and her ability to clean and jerk 175 pounds. When Turner Motorsports started searching for a pit-worthy female, Abbott's name came up pretty quickly. She was expected to cut her teeth in the Camping World Truck series, but a few months after her first appearance in the pits, she landed a full-time gig with Michael Waltrip Racing. We've finally got another crush in the NASCAR circuit.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY (TOP) BUTCH DILL/AP/CORBIS, (BOTTOM) CHARLOTTE OBSERVER/GETTY IMAGES



RONDA ROUSEY

What's better than watching two men beat the shit out of each other? Watching two women, obviously. We'd like to thank Rousey for elevating the catfight to a whole new level—and looking good doing it. Rousey, who is widely considered the top female mixed-martial-arts fighter in the world, made history as the first woman to enter the octagon as a UFC fighter. Dana White named her the first UFC women's bantamweight champion last year, and Rousey promptly defended her title with a win by submission in the first round of UFC 157. Not surprising when you consider her badass pedigree: Her mom was a former World Judo Champion, and Rousey was the youngest judo competitor at the 2004 Olympics and a bronze medalist at the 2008 Olympics. And—as if we didn't like her enough already—she swears by prefight nookie to boost her testosterone levels, and dreams of someday beating the crap out of Kim Kardashian.



CHRIS KLUWE

We're not going to start a fight with the former Minnesota Vikings punter any time soon. Not because we think he could physically kick our ass, but because we know he'd go online and write a scathingly funny, obscenity-filled rant that would make us look like primitive assholes. Which, incidentally, is exactly what he did when a Maryland state delegate told Ravens owner Steve Bisciotti to shut his players up after linebacker Brendon Ayanbadejo spoke out in support of gay marriage. "Not only are you clearly violating the First Amendment, you also come across as a narcissistic fromunda stain," Kluwe wrote. "Gay people ... won't magically turn you into a lustful cockmonster. They won't even overthrow the government in an orgy of hedonistic debauchery because all of a sudden they have the same legal rights as the other 90 percent of the population." Right to free speech, indeed. Still, Jason Collins credited Kluwe with making his trip out of the closet a little easier, which is a pretty badass accomplishment in itself.



LUKE HANGCOCK

It was *the* big story of March Madness: In the quarterfinals of the NCAA men's basketball tournament, Louisville guard Kevin Ware jumped to block a shot and landed awkwardly near the sideline. Both bones in his lower leg broke in half on impact, and his tibia pierced the skin below his knee, leaving the limb hanging at a gruesomely unnatural angle as he lay on the ground. The natural reaction was to recoil in horror, which is what 99.9 percent of the people who witnessed the injury did, including Ware's teammates on the nearby bench. Make that all but one of his teammates: Luke Hancock knelt down and spoke calmly to the stricken player. "He got me to that point where I really had to put the pain on hold," Ware told reporters later.

Hancock produced essential on-court leadership last season as well. In the national semifinals against Wichita State, he scored 20 points to lead a Cardinals comeback that got them to the championship game against Michigan. There, Hancock went one better: He nailed four three-pointers to keep his team in the game in the first half, and finished with 22 points and the Final Four Most Outstanding Player Award as the Cardinals won the title. —*John Bolster*

INTERNATIONAL GUEST STARS

Austrian **Felix Baumgartner** skydived from a balloon 24 miles above the Earth, traveling at supersonic speeds during his 20-minute descent and becoming the first skydiver to break the sound barrier.

Swedish golfer **Daniela Holmquist** played out her qualifying round after being bitten by a black widow spider. She opened her leg with a tee and squeezed out the venom before getting back to the game. Unfortunately, she didn't make the cut for the tournament.

Canadian **Spencer West**, who lost his legs at age five due to a genetic disorder, reached the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro after climbing 80 percent of the way on his hands. His efforts raised more than \$500,000 for the educational charity Free the Children.

Veterans' Affairs

There's more going on for military vets and personnel than fighting for their benefits. Many vets continue to serve in other badass ways.

MAJOR JEREMY KILBURN

While hiking with a friend in California's Shasta Trinity Forest, Kilburn tripped over his dog and broke his ankle. A group of campers heard his screams for help and radioed their base camp, where someone called 911 and requested a medevac. Here's where it gets weird: When the rescue chopper landed, paramedic Tony Stanley climbed out and started up an embankment toward Kilburn. But a chopper blade struck him in the head, fracturing his skull and knocking him unconscious. And now it gets even weirder: Kilburn happens to be an Air Force critical-care pulmonologist, so he rolled down the hill to Stanley and—with the help of his friend and one of the campers—opened the paramedic's airway and helped control the bleeding. Everyone piled in the medevac, and Stanley made it safely to the ICU. Kilburn plays down his heroics, saying, "There wasn't much action on my part." Um, if rolling down an embankment on a broken ankle to stabilize someone with a severe head wound doesn't qualify as "action," we'd hate to see what a rough day looks like in Kilburn's world.

NAVY VETERAN RON WHITE

We have trouble remembering someone's name 30 seconds after we meet him at a bar. Meanwhile, 39-year-old White decided to memorize the names of the more than 2,200 troops who have been killed in Afghanistan in the past decade. White—who served in Afghanistan in 2007—was a two-time USA Memory Champion and teaches classes on improving memory, but the daunting task still took him about ten months to complete. His dedication paid off earlier this year, when he stood in downtown Fort Worth for 11 hours, writing the names of all the fallen soldiers on a blank wall while many of their grieving families watched. "I don't think any member of the military who serves in a time of war and comes back unharmed ever feels they did enough," White wrote on his blog. "Maybe with this, I could do a little more." And he will: White plans to repeat the feat in other cities to raise money and awareness for the Wounded Warrior Project.

THE COMBAT WOUNDED VETERAN CHALLENGE TEAM

Back in 2011, we wrote about badasses Dan Nevins, Neil Duncan, and Kirk Bauer, a trio of disabled vets who scaled Kilimanjaro with one nonartificial leg between them. This February, a team of eight wounded veterans followed in their footsteps, this time in the name of science. Some climbers had a personal crusade: Former Army **Staff Sergeant Danny Swank** wanted to motivate vets who, like him, had lost limbs in the war. **Staff Sergeant Billy Costello** wanted to show his two sons that he would still be able to have fun with them, despite having lost his right leg to an improvised explosive device. **Sergeant First Class Mike Rodriguez** wanted to study the effects of elevation on his traumatic brain injury. And the whole team helped to gather data on an advanced prosthetic socket that would be better able to handle extreme conditions. Overachievers.



LIEUTENANT COMMANDER CHRIS CASSIDY

As a ten-year veteran of the elite U.S. Navy SEALs, Cassidy performed countless combat dives, boarded noncompliant ships in the Persian Gulf, parachuted into enemy territory in Afghanistan, and logged hundreds of hours piloting the Navy SEAL Delivery Vehicle—the small submarine the SEALs use to infiltrate hardened positions on enemy shores. In his four six-month combat deployments, Cassidy received two Bronze Stars, but he's been making the news most recently because he was one of three astronauts deployed to the International Space Station in March. Taking off from Kazakhstan, along with two Russian cosmonauts, the former SEAL was part of the team that participated in the record-breaking six-hour flight to the ISS. If you know someone more badass than a Navy SEAL turned astronaut, we'd like to hear about him.—B.T.



SECRETARY OF DEFENSE CHUCK HAGEL

Hagel—the first former enlisted combat soldier to head up the Department of Defense—has one of the most bizarre, badass résumés we've ever seen: Excused by the draft board, he went to Vietnam anyway. He and his brother Tom served on the same infantry squad, saving each other's lives and collecting five Purple Hearts between them. After he got home, Hagel worked as a lobbyist, campaigned for Ronald Reagan, and became deputy administrator for the VA. After a clash with a fellow admin (who compared Agent Orange to acne), Hagel went into the private sector, cofounding a cellphone carrier and running an investment firm. In 1996 he ran for the Senate, served for 12 years, then left to teach at Georgetown University. Hagel doesn't have the easiest road ahead, but we're pretty sure he can handle a little pressure.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY (TOP) NATALIA KOLESNIKOVA/GETTY IMAGES, (BOTTOM) MARTIN H. SIMON/CORBIS

Reality Stars

We love it when offscreen actions speak louder than on-screen acting.



LL COOL J

Last August, a 56-year-old transient broke into an L.A. mansion, apparently picked at random, in the middle of the night. Unfortunately for the thief, the mansion belonged to LL Cool J, and the star and his family were upstairs asleep—presumably after LL spent a long day bench-pressing school buses, based on the size of his biceps. LL ran downstairs in his underwear and promptly beat the shit out of the intruder, breaking his nose and jaw, and restraining him until police arrived a few minutes later. “It wasn’t one of those beat-your-chest moments,” LL told Oprah. “It was one of those grateful, thank God, gratitude moments that I was able to handle the situation and ... everybody was safe.” Needless to say, LL wasn’t charged for assault—after all, he was just doing what his mama said, right?



JENNIFER LAWRENCE

She’s sexy, she’s supertalented, and we suspect she could kick Green Arrow’s ass in a bow fight. But she made this list thanks to her refusal to turn into a spit-shined, faux-humble automaton at the Oscars like everyone else. On the red carpet, she bitched about how hungry she was and answered one of Kristin Chenoweth’s questions with “Does a bear shit in the woods?” When her name was called for the gold statue, she tripped on the stairs and fell, then joked about getting a pity-ovation from the audience. After that, she did a shot or two before hitting the press room, flipping off reporters and answering questions with her trademark honesty. Our obsession with her has been well-documented, but Oscar night sealed the deal.



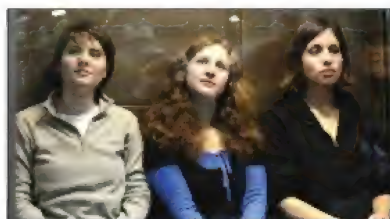
CAITLIN DOUGHTY

This Los Angeles-based mortician and writer wants you to think about death—your own. She’s founded a group of like-minded writers, artists, filmmakers, and other mortality-focused folks called the Order of the Good Death. They’re proponents of accepting the inevitable end, knowing and understanding what happens to our bodies after death, and selecting a meaningful funeral ritual. Doughty is also a bit of an internet starlet, as the telegenic hostess of the popular “Ask a Mortician” video series, in which she addresses questions and concerns sent in by fans and followers on such topics as natural burial, body donation, and exploding caskets. She’ll be part of a group hosting Death Salon in L.A. in October 2013, a weekend of lectures, films, music, and socializing on topics relating to death, sex, femininity, mortality, and mourning. Doughty also has a book due out next year from Norton, following an eight-way bidding war, entitled *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes (and Other Lessons From the Crematory)*. We think all funeral directors are badass for doing what they do (would you do it?), but Doughty gets our vote for making the inevitable accessible, advocating improvement in the death-care industry, and helping people face their fears with rationality and humor.—Christine Colby



KEVIN MICHAEL CONNOLLY

Before he was 25, Connolly medaled at the X Games, wrote a memoir, got a photography degree, had his photos exhibited at the Smithsonian, and landed a thrill-seeking show on the Travel Channel. And if all that didn’t make us feel like underachievers, Connolly did it despite being born without legs. His parents enrolled him in gymnastics and wrestling, and he eventually moved on to skateboarding ... and competitive skiing, hiking, longboarding, and world travel. It was on a trip through Europe that he started snapping photos of nosy onlookers. That evolved into a series called *The Rolling Exhibition*, in which Connolly documented the stares and reactions he got throughout 27 different countries. Now Connolly is back on the road—this time as the host of the Travel Channel show *Armed & Ready*, where he shares his tricks for getting around the world without legs. Prepare to feel like a pussy.



INTERNATIONAL GUEST STARS

The feminist punk band **Pussy Riot** turned an antichurch, antigovernment action at a cathedral into a music video, and got arrested for their artistic efforts. Three of the members were sentenced to two years in a penal colony—which is not as much fun as it sounds, as that’s not a penis reference. One woman is out on probation, but at press time, the other two are still doing time.

Heavy Medal

We honor the military heroes who received their due from the armed forces this year. By Ben Thompson



STAFF SERGEANT CLINTON L. ROMESHA

61st Cavalry Regiment, 4th Infantry Division

Staff Sergeant Romesha was at Combat Outpost Keating when the 52 American soldiers defending the position were ambushed by more than 400 Taliban fighters in a daring attack on a fortified U.S. installation. While the beleaguered defenders were pounded on all sides by rocket-propelled grenades, mortars, and heavy machine guns from entrenched high-ground positions in the Hindu Kush mountains, Romesha rushed into action, opening up with his M4 rifle and personally destroying at least two enemy machine-gun teams. When an RPG round blew up the generator Romesha was using for cover, spraying his entire body with white-hot shrapnel, Romesha fell back, mobilized a five-man assault team, and went right back into the middle of the action. Firing his M4 and a sniper rifle he'd picked up along the way, Romesha killed three more Taliban soldiers and constantly exposed himself to enemy fire in a desperate attempt to set up a defensive perimeter despite the enemy swarming around him. Calling in air strikes and ordering his men to lay down intense covering fire, Romesha set up an aid station and bought the American defenders time to withdraw to a defensive position and regroup. After the 52 defenders had consolidated in a perimeter, Romesha led a counterattack that pushed 100 yards into enemy territory, preventing the base from being overrun. Thanks to his daring actions during the intense, close-quarters firefight, Staff Sergeant Romesha is only the fourth living Medal of Honor recipient in the War on Terror.



STEWART CARL CLARK

USS Aaron Ward, U.S. Navy

Although he didn't receive his Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal until 2012, this 95-year-old African-American man's heroic actions took place 66 years earlier. On May 3, 1945, during the closing days of World War II, Clark was on the damage-control team on the destroyer mine layer USS *Aaron Ward* when it was hit by no fewer than six Japanese kamikaze attacks in a single night. When the first plane smashed into the destroyer, the explosion killed most of the damage-control team and broke Clark's collarbone, but that didn't stop this determined sailor from taking a fire hose that was designed to be operated by four men and using it—by himself—to prevent the ensuing fire from setting the ammo locker ablaze, which would have created an explosion that could have ripped the ship apart. Clark continued to fight fires through the night, and thanks in no small part to his actions, the USS *Aaron Ward* became one of only two U.S. warships to survive six direct hits from Japanese kamikazes.



STAFF SERGEANT EDDIE PEOPLES

386th Movement Control Battalion, 21st Theater Sustainment Command: Italy

Staff Sergeant Peoples was back in the States, on leave from active service, just minding his own business at his local bank when a man ran in with a handgun, told everyone to hit the deck, and proceeded to rob the place. Peoples shielded his two young sons while the robber was waving his pistol around, but as soon as the thief left, Peoples ran out to the parking lot, hopped in his rental van, and used it to block the robber's only escape route. The bank robber rammed Peoples' van twice with his sedan, but when that didn't deter our hero, the guy got out and stuck the gun right in his face. Peoples, an 11-year veteran, grabbed the gun, disarming the thief, and took him down, pinning him to the deck until the cops arrived. For his daring vigilante justice, Peoples received the Soldier's Medal, the highest award offered for nonmilitary heroism.

CORPORAL CLIFFORD WOOLDRIDGE

3rd Battalion, 7th Marines, 1st Marine Division

When this Marine machine gunner's mounted patrol was ambushed by a hardened force of Taliban fighters, Corporal Wooldridge bailed out of his armored personnel carrier, led a fire team across open ground, and personally wiped out a squad of eight enemy soldiers. Then he proceeded to lay down suppressing fire with his M249 SAW machine gun while the rest of his team withdrew to defensive positions. During one break in the fighting, Wooldridge heard voices from behind a nearby wall. Naturally, he ran over to investigate, and when he rounded the corner he was face-to-face with two heavily armed Taliban fighters. Wooldridge eliminated them with a burst from his M249, but then, when he'd stopped to reload, he noticed the barrel of another Taliban machine gun poking around the corner in his direction. Wooldridge didn't even hesitate; he dropped his weapon, grabbed the barrel of the guy's machine gun, ripped it out of his hands, and beat the enemy soldier to death with his own gun. Wooldridge received the Navy Cross last May.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY (TOP LEFT) JASON REED/REUTERS/CORBIS; (TOP RIGHT) PAUL SAKUMA/AP; (BOTTOM) COURTESY ARMY



SERGEANT JULIA BRINGLOE

3rd General Support Aviation Battalion, 10th Aviation Regiment

When an attack on a Taliban training ground in Kunar Province went sideways and resulted in heavy American casualties, flight paramedic Bringloe and the crew of Black Hawk *DUSTOFF 73* were called into the middle of an intense firefight to evacuate the increasing number of wounded men on the ground. Operating in the thin air at more than 10,000 feet of elevation, Bringloe was lowered by a 15-story-long cable into the middle of the gun battle, where she was responsible for securing the wounded to a stretcher, providing first aid, and extracting them up into the belly of the Black Hawk. In 60 hours of nonstop action, Sergeant Bringloe extracted 14 wounded soldiers from the battlefield, strapping them to neck boards and hooking up IV fluids while Taliban fighters fired high-velocity rounds at her. She fractured her leg shielding a wounded soldier when her harness swung into a tree during one extraction, but not even that stopped her from getting back into the action immediately. For her heroic deeds, she received the Distinguished Flying Cross in October 2012, and was named the 2012 USO Army Woman of the Year.

In Memoriam

We always honor the biggest American badasses who have passed away, but this year we had to broaden our horizons to bid adieu to the Iron Lady herself, Margaret Thatcher.



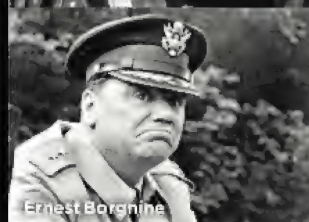
Margaret Thatcher



Author/SEAL sniper Chris Kyle



Ed Koch



Ernest Borgnine



Hector Camacho



Michael Clarke Duncan



Neil Armstrong



General Norman Schwarzkopf Jr.



Sally Ride

- Medal of Honor recipients James L. Stone and Senator Daniel Inouye
- Tuskegee Airmen Herbert Carter, Fitzroy Newsum, Eugene Smith, and Frank Walker
- Marine Corps Brigadier General Margaret Brewer
- World War II paratrooper/Filthy Thirteen leader Jake McNiece
- Highest-ranking Vietnam POW Colonel Benjamin Purcell
- Airman Reis Leming, who rescued 27 people with a raft during the 1953 North Sea flood
- Navy test pilot/space-shuttle astronaut Alan G. Poindexter
- Test pilot/NASA engineer Sam T. Beddingfield
- Female aviator Pearl Laska Chamberlain
- Diplomats J. Christopher Stevens and Sean Smith, killed during the consulate attack in Benghazi
- Former Surgeon General/straight-talking, safe-sex advocate C. Everett Koop
- POW/MIA advocate Maureen Dunn
- Civil rights activists Annie B. Martin and Lawrence Guyot; University of Alabama integrator James Hood; attorney James Nabrit
- American Indian Movement activist Russell Means
- National Marrow Donor Program activist Janet Liang
- Breast Cancer Action founder Barbara Brenner
- Sex Workers Outreach Project founder Robyn Few
- "Sexual freedom" activist Dan Massey
- *Cosmopolitan* editor Helen Gurley Brown
- Boxers Johnny Tapla and Omar Henry
- Hall of Fame boxing trainer and commentator Emanuel Steward
- Boxing matchmaker Johnny Bos
- Pro bullfighter Patricia McCormick
- World road-biking champion (1969) Audrey McElmury
- Hall of Fame NASCAR driver/owner Cotton Owens
- NASCAR driver/team owner Cecil Gordon
- Indy 500 driver Jerry Grant
- Motor-sports commentator Chris Economaki
- Hot-rod builder Norm Grabowski
- Rodeo Hall of Famer Howard "Sonny" Linger
- Surfer Terry "Tubesteak" Tracy
- Rock climber Layton Kor
- Skateboarder/snowboarder Tom Sims
- Snowmobile racer Caleb Moore
- NFL Films founder Steve Sabol
- Country-music legend George Jones
- Jazz musician and composer Dave Brubeck
- Doors cofounder/keyboardist Ray Manzarek
- Slayer drummer Jeff Hanneman
- Science-fiction author Ray Bradbury
- Pulitzer Prize-winning film critic Roger Ebert
- Journalist/adventurer Michael J. Ybarra
- *The Warriors* author Sol Yurick
- *MAD* magazine illustrator Bob Clarke
- Stop-motion-animation legend Ray Harryhausen
- Nobel laureate Dr. Joseph Murray, who performed the first kidney transplant
- Cochlear-implant inventor Dr. William F. House
- Post-polio-syndrome expert Dr. Jacqueline Perry
- Windsurfing innovator Jim Drake
- Schwinn Sting-Ray bike designer Al Fritz
- Artist LeRoy Neiman

THE VA CLUSTERFUCK

Over the past few months, the issue of delays in awarding VA disability benefits has made headlines. We take an in-depth look at the situation.

By John Rico

During the past 12 years, some two million Americans have served overseas, both fighting the enemy and supporting the war-fighting infrastructure. Nearly half of these two million troops are now civilians, and have turned to the Department of Veterans Affairs for assistance. It's an onslaught the VA found itself ill equipped to manage; the agency lacked the technology, infrastructure, and manpower to process these requests for help.

In a war zone, the body's aging process is on fast-forward. Infantry soldiers continually marching up the side of a mountain carrying 70-pound packs can use up, in just a single year, knees meant to last a lifetime. Truck drivers attempting to navigate hostile, unfamiliar terrain get into accidents that leave lifelong damage. Combat engineers building firebases in remote deserts who endure 80-hour weeks and carry on working despite injuries end up as 30-year-olds on the operating table of a back surgeon.

Last year, some 1.3 million troops filed paperwork with the VA claiming disability compensation and medical care. The backlog as of April/May 2013 consists of almost 900,000 cases; wait times of two years or more have become commonplace. As of press time, the VA has announced plans to improve the situation by going paperless. In mid-April, an announcement was made that all two-year-old claims would be resolved in the next 60 days. (An attempt was

made to contact the VA for comment, but we did not get a response.)

Let's look at just a few of the people who have been caught in the backlog.

Jeremy Weir, a 29-year-old Iraq vet in rural Oregon, came home with intense headaches, depression, and constant anxiety after finding himself at the intersecting end point of four rocket-propelled grenades. "It's something you can't describe," he says. "You just can't stop your body from sweating, your heart from racing. Holding and hugging my kids doesn't feel right anymore. It's almost as if I'm hugging a stranger to be nice. I just have so much going on in my head from my experiences, it doesn't want to stop." Weir was working for an electrical wholesaler when his boss jokingly asked who had killed more people, Weir or another vet who worked there. Weir lost his temper, and his job. The VA responded by waging a four-year battle with Weir over disability compensation, finally awarding full

disability only after Weir became suicidal and weathered multiple mental-health hospitalizations.

Marine Kevin English suffered from PTSD, traumatic brain injury, and disabling neck and back pain after a motor-vehicle collision during his third tour in Iraq. English's injuries and frequent absences from work for medical treatment made it difficult for him to hold down a job. On November 8, 2012, English's wife, Lindsay Dove—who was supporting the couple and their two young children—uploaded a video onto YouTube. She was looking into the camera while holding up a printout from her husband's VA eBenefits webpage and reading the estimated completion date of his application for disability compensation: May 5, 2014—for an application that was submitted in February 2011 and marked PRIORITY due to financial hardship. Dove pointed at the estimated date of completion and angrily said, "That, right there, is why soldiers commit suicide."

That video, her second on YouTube regarding this issue, was the culmination of years of frustration. Dove's calls to the VA to inquire about the status of her husband's application frequently failed to connect; often, she would get an electronic message to call back later when lines were

PHOTOGRAPH BY DANIEL BENDIS/GETTY IMAGES

★Some names in this article have been changed.★



available. When she did get through, it took anywhere from 30 minutes to an hour to speak to an operator, at which point he or she read from a carefully worded script that explained no information was available on English's case. Dove is still angry. "They should have something that gives you something to rest your mind on," she says. "Just something that says, your application is 50 percent complete, or you're number 50,000 out of half a million, whatever. But there's nothing." In Dove's case, it took two YouTube videos and the involvement of Senator John McCain for the VA to act, awarding English a 100 percent disability rating. A four-year, three-month processing time was reduced to two weeks.

Unfortunately, Dove's statement about suicide is not an exaggeration. Vets are four times more likely than civilians to kill themselves. Many of them—like Abel Gutierrez, who shot himself in the head; William Hamilton, who stepped in front of a train; or Francis Guilfoyle, who hanged himself from a tree outside a VA office—had turned to the VA for help.

It's not just the processing time that is angering troops and their families. There's also an epidemic of missing paperwork and few available medical appointments. "Martin Samuelson" recalls being turned away from appointments because his files were missing, and being told he'd have to visit the emergency room to get a tube of skin cream. "That takes half the fucking night," Samuelson says. "And you're in the way when there are legitimate emergencies like guys going into cardiac arrest and shit." Although he endured a long wait for his own disability application to be reviewed, Samuelson gets most incensed when he talks about working at one particular VA office installing electrical outlets: "We did the work at night, and about every fucking sixth office we went into, we turned on the lights and the motherfuckers [the night staff meant to be processing applications] were sleeping!"

"Ridge Andrews" details what he considers to be a recurring pattern of bureaucratic mismanagement: "You take the day off work, drive four hours to [the VA hospital], only to be told after waiting that they don't have the right equipment. Or you find out they canceled the appointment and didn't tell you, but the next available appointment isn't for five months."

What makes contact with the VA all the more upsetting is that—at least from the perspective of veterans—there are no clear rules governing how benefit allocation is decided. Andrews received medical care for his traumatic brain injury, but not disability compensation. “I put in an appeal,” Andrews says, “but it’s been so long, I’m probably lost in the system. It’s been three years.”

Troops with similar conditions to one another often end up with wildly different outcomes; an injury that doesn’t warrant medical care for one veteran will yield 50 percent disability compensation for another vet. Sometimes an injury that’s deemed serious by the Department of Defense is ignored by the VA. Consider “Sean Grantham,” who was medically discharged from the Army for injuries sustained in Afghanistan, only to be told by the VA that those same injuries weren’t eligible for post-service medical care. “The VA said my injuries were not combat-related.” It’s no secret that the Department of Defense and the VA have separate evaluation systems and often don’t come to the same conclusion, and that the two entities don’t share information.

The million-dollar question, of course, is how did the VA get so fucked up? As Martin Samuelson so adeptly puts it, “We’re a decade into this war now. I can understand growing pains if this is year one or year two, but we’re a decade in. How the hell is it that they’re still so screwed up?”

In part, the overall deluge of applicants is because many wounds that killed soldiers in wars past are no longer fatal, thanks to advances in battlefield medical technology, body armor, and blast-protected vehicles. Soldiers are seriously wounded, but alive. And those wounded vets have complex claims. On average, each claim for disability compensation involves no fewer than ten separate ailments, each of which needs to be evaluated by a specialist. And when you’re talking about hundreds of thousands of claims, that takes time. Lots and lots of time.

Of course, the government never anticipated the mission in either Iraq or Afghanistan lasting a decade, never anticipated so many wounded soldiers. The government never bothered to invest the VA with the technology or infrastructure that would allow it to easily process a million claims in a single calendar

year. The result is an organization attempting far too late to transform from a system rooted in paper files and bureaucratic processes to one based on integrated technologies and customer service.

And while the VA is struggling to keep up with the demands of Iraq and Afghanistan vets, it’s also continually expanding the pool of potential applicants; in 2010, after decades of advocacy and legal action by veterans groups, former VA chief Eric Shinseki decided to begin taking disability applications for Vietnam veterans who had been exposed to Agent Orange and were experiencing migraines, cancer, and respiratory illnesses. It’s difficult to know whether illnesses suffered by sixtysomething Vietnam vets are due to Agent Orange exposure some 40 years earlier, but in 2011 alone, the VA accepted some 240,000 disability claims for Agent Orange exposure. (Agent Orange exposure is classified by the VA as a “presumptive illness,”

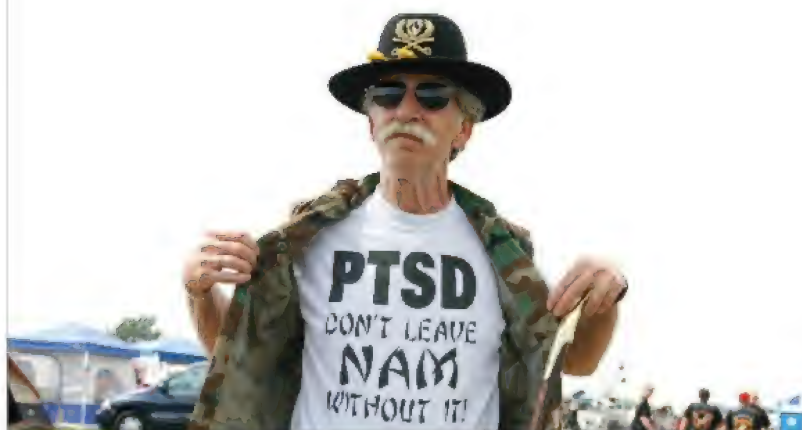
meaning that any service personnel who even briefly set foot in Vietnam during specified dates are able to apply for disability compensation without having to prove exposure, a legal burden which would be almost impossible for claimants to meet given the loss of records from that era, and the government’s longtime reluctance to come clean about the extent to which Agent Orange was used as a defoliant during the war.)

The VA cites this continually expanded pool of applicants as a justification for the protracted wait times. In its defense, it points to a number of pilot programs—including digital processing and integration with the Department of Defense—that should speed up processing times, and says it hopes to have its backlog completely eliminated within three years. It can’t be ignored, however, that this is what the VA said in 2007.

The oversize elephant in the room that no one is talking about is that some



PHOTOGRAPHS BY (ABOVE) HILL STREET STUDIOS/GETTY IMAGES; (RIGHT) JEREMY HOGAN/LAMY



Troops we promised to care for if they protected us aren't getting the help they need when they need it. And the big onslaught is yet to come.

vets are abusing the system.

Consider that, by May 2012, more than 200,000 veterans had been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, and it's likely that a sizable percentage will qualify for benefits. (More than 130,000 currently receive benefits.) In part, this is due to the rising popularity of PTSD as a buzzword. The media has reported that soldiers have been reluctant to seek help, particularly while they're still serving, and well-meaning campaigns have pushed active-duty personnel and veterans to be treated for it. As Ridge Andrews remarks, "The VA and the military are pushing everyone to go for PTSD, so everyone getting out either thinks they have it or thinks they need to file for it."

Ironically, the rules pertaining to disability applications for PTSD were lessened, with the benefit of doubt being given to the soldier, precisely to ensure that cases weren't being overlooked. But it's possible that easing the rules on PTSD has resulted in so many applicants that physically wounded warriors are getting lost in the shuffle. (A 2005 congressional

bill that would have investigated fraudulent claims of PTSD was never passed by the House.)

Jason Kalb, a former soldier who now works for the VA to determine eligibility, had this to say: "Are there legitimate cases? You bet. Are there vets trying to scam the system? Absolutely. I was an infantryman in the middle of a combat zone in the middle of nowhere; my service was a lot different from some pencil pusher. Guys will ask me what they need to do to file a claim. A guy will hear that one guy gets this much money, so he wants it, too. It's a lot of jealousy, greed, and looking for free money. I hear guys talking about how to word their statements or how to act and dress for exams. PTSD has become a punch line in the VA. But if someone files a claim, it has to be examined. Fake or not, it has to be seen. Golden goose, you say? Fucking right. Single veterans rated at 100 percent service-connected disability get \$2,800 a month for life, tax-free, and they can still have a job. Anyone will try to get points for that kind of money, myself included. I have filed for disability.

Why not? I served. I had to see what they would give me. I was only denied one thing, and I'm in the middle of an appeal process."

The VA also has to sort out the real from the fake when it comes to bad backs, ankles, shoulders, and other physical ailments. Former airman "Jeremy Guzman" receives \$129 a month on a 10 percent disability rating for screwing up his ankle playing football. He says, "Am I proud that I'm manipulating a system for money and health care? Especially when there are many other veterans that need it worse than me? No, not really."

This is what makes the VA's job so difficult: having to discern between injuries that were received in the line of service and injuries from, say, playing high school football. The VA has to distinguish those cases where the nation owes the returning vet care for harm done in a combat zone, and those vets who are attempting to get a pre- or post-service injury covered by the taxpayer.

This is how you get a clusterfuck. There's no elegant way to express it, no pretty label to stick on top. The VA is an underfunded, inefficient relic of an earlier time. It's a paper-and-pencils organization attempting to process a million claims a year, some of which are suspect, and some of which are dire emergencies. The point is, the troops we promised to care for if they protected us aren't getting the help they need when they need it. And, according to Jason Hansman of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, "The big onslaught isn't even coming yet. A lot of troops are still in the military. When we wind down in Afghanistan and everyone gets out, we're going to see a lot more vets filing claims." ☙✚

The author is an infantry vet from the U.S. Army who served in Afghanistan and receives 10 percent disability compensation for constant back pain.

Disability Benefits Explained

Applications for financial compensation mostly involve disability compensation, but they also include pensions for the spouses of World War II veterans. Disability compensation is supposed to be for permanent injuries that will not improve over time. Troops are typically rated for disability from 10 percent to 100 percent, in increments of 10, with injuries such as bad backs or ankles earning 10 percent, and missing limbs or other serious injuries earning 100 percent. Many claimants file a number of claims in order to earn a higher percentage based on more than one small reward; for example, a soldier

earning 10 percent for a bad back, 40 percent for PTSD, and 20 percent for hearing loss would be rated at 70 percent disabled. Full disability for a soldier without dependents currently yields slightly more than \$2,800 a month, while 10 percent disability earns \$129 a month. Disability compensation is tax-free, often for life (though sometimes for only a prescribed period of time), and recipients can continue to work.

Veterans can be rated as disabled, but not be awarded any financial compensation. How those distinctions are made is part of the mystery and wonder of the VA. ☙✚



starrpower

Natalia Starr left Poland as a child, and now calls Los Angeles home. That's convenient for us, as she (and our August Pet, her sister Natasha) is a welcome addition to the adult industry—and to the *Penthouse* family.

Photographs by W. Lawrence Stevens







"I love working as an adult-film star and model. I've met such great people from around the world, and the lifestyle and events are so much fun."





"I fantasize about surprising one lucky guy with two of my girlfriends. We would put on a sexy little show for him, then ravage him."



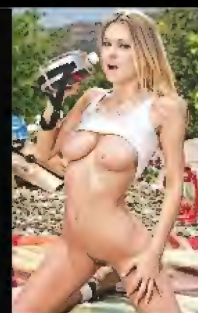






"When I have time to relax, I like to watch TV and scan the internet for fun stories and sexy pictures. And I like to create my own fashion designs!"





Vital stats:
34D-27-32-58"
20 years old

Where are you from?
Poland. I left as a young child, and I would love to go back to see the family I still have there.

Favorite food:
Beef stew.

Favorite drink:
Sprite.

Favorite TV show:
The Big Bang Theory.

Favorite movies:
The Hunger Games, *Ace Ventura: Pet Detective*.

Favorite vacation spot:
Miami. The beaches and nightlife are so much fun.

Dream vacation spot:
Paris. The sights and food sound amazing.

Favorite way to workout:
Swimming.

Favorite way to relax:
A day at a spa.

When are you happiest?
After an orgasm. Nothing's better.

Who are your real-life heroes?
People who make a difference, like teachers, firefighters, policemen, and members of the armed forces.

If you won a million dollars, you would...
Start up a production company and direct adult movies.

The most daring thing you've done?
Ride a wild roller coaster. I'd like to try skydiving.

SEE MORE OF NATALIA AT PENTHOUSE.COM.



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JULY 2013 PENTHOUSE PET OF THE MONTH

STARR





starry-eyed

Our Starr gazing has us seeing double, and we couldn't be happier. The only way to improve a gorgeous buxom blonde like July Pet Natalia Starr is to put a second one right next to her—and when you add in the fact that she and Natasha are sisters, the heat is off the charts.

Photographs by W. Lawrence Stevens





"I enjoy the adult industry very much. Having sex with someone for the first time is very exciting, and I get to do that all the time with the sexiest people in the world. And I love thinking about the pleasure I bring to the audience!"





"I'm a huge admirer of Pam Anderson. She's a sex symbol who did things her way, and still made time for a family. It's a dream of mine to have a big family one day, and to be that sexy soccer mom."





"My favorite fantasy was always to be with a woman. Now that I've been able to do that a few times in my career, I realize I'm a true size queen. I like big breasts and well-hung men."









Vital stats:
34C-28-34; 5'7"
25 years old

Where are you from?
Poland. I left in my early teens, but I do remember liking the easy way of life and the beautiful countryside.

If you could live anywhere, it would be:
Las Vegas! I love the casinos and the nightlife, and the weather is perfect, so no allergies.

Favorite vacation spot:
Puerto Rico. I love the weather and the amazing beaches.

Dream vacation spot:
Hawaii. It seems like the perfect place for a sexy getaway.

Favorite food:
Sushi, and anything from Poland.

Favorite drinks:
Coconut water, plum wine, Chardonnay, and Earl Grey tea.

Favorite kind of music:
Hard-core old-school rap, like DMX, Biggie Smalls, Lil' Kim, Tupac Shakur.

Favorite sports:
UFC, basketball, baseball, and soccer.

Favorite way to work out:
Kickboxing. It's an intense, full-body workout.

Favorite way to relax:
Nothing beats time in a hot tub.

If you could have sex with anyone, who would it be?
Mark Wahlberg and Paul Walker together. That would be perfect.

What's the hottest movie sex scene?
Anything with a big dick. I love to masturbate to that. As for mainstream films, the scene in *The Notebook*.

SEE MORE OF NATASHA AT PENTHOUSE.COM.

Meet NATASHA STARR
AUGUST 2013 PENTHOUSE PET OF THE MONTH

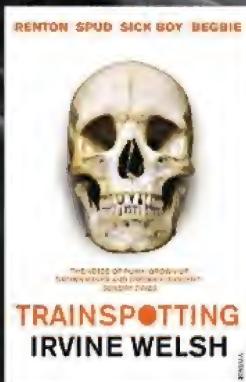


01 • NATASHA STARR
AUGUST 2013 PENTHOUSE PET OF THE MONTH

THE WRITE CLUB

Trainspotting, Irvine Welsh's debut, established the author as a literary badass. In the 20 years since, the amateur boxer has delivered a series of knockout works.

By Tony DuShane



T*rainspotting*, a gritty novel composed of a series of short stories about a group of heroin addicts and the people populating their lives, introduced a generation of readers and film junkies to Mark Renton and his mates: Sick Boy, Spud, Begbie, and Tommy. Since then, it's been adapted for the big screen by Danny Boyle (*Slumdog Millionaire*), and Welsh has written both a sequel, 2002's *Porno*, and a prequel about Renton and Sick Boy, 2012's *Skagboys*. Welsh also has directed and produced films, deejayed at nightclubs, and written plays and screenplays. Oh, and published five additional novels and four short-story collections.

Welsh's latest film adaptation, *Filth*—based on his 1998 novel of the same name—will open in theaters in October; James McAvoy stars as a corrupt, bipolar, junkie cop. It's a new direction for McAvoy, who's best known for playing Professor Xavier in *X-Men: First Class*, Idi Amin's doctor in *The Last King of Scotland*, and a faun in *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.

Welsh grew up in Edinburgh, Scotland, although he and his wife currently live in Chicago. If you'd like to get to know him, follow his Twitter feed, @WelshIrvine. He updates constantly, sometimes spouting off about footie (soccer), and usually drafting 140 characters of silly fun at least 20 times a day.

You're a producer on *Filth*?

I think everyone was a producer on *Filth*. The production credits are as long as your arm. But I think it has to be like that for that kind of production. You've got so many people involved. It was shot in Scotland, Belgium, and Germany, and post-production was done in Sweden. There were so many different production companies involved in it; I think that's what happens in independent moviemaking. Nobody is just going to write you one big check. The good thing about that is, we have more control with what we want to do. But it's a big challenge to keep everyone enthusiastic, because it's kind of a long process to come together with one vision of it.

How is the film version of *Porno*, the *Trainspotting* sequel, coming along? We're hoping to get the original cast [of *Trainspotting*], and there have been some meetings and dis-



Jonny Lee Miller
in *Trainspotting*



Ewan McGregor in *Trainspotting*



Ewan McGregor in *Trainspotting*



James McAvoy in *Filth*

cussions, and everyone seems to be on the same page. There's been a realization that if we don't do this in the next few years, then we won't be able to do it at all. The age of the material and the age of the actors, it's getting close to the last chance to do it. Everyone is keen—it's just the question of are we really committed to put in the time. We're getting to that point now.

So you're in do-or-die mode?

I'm more enthusiastic at the idea of doing it than the idea of not doing it. I mean, you don't do something just for the sake of doing it, you have to get the script together and it has to be exciting. I just see so much potential in it. There is so much mileage in these characters, and I would be excited to see them come back. I think a lot of people will be as well. These characters are iconic, and the actors are very iconic in these roles.

What are you working on now?

I've been trying to do the screenplay for *Glue*, which is one of my books, and I've been doing the TV stuff and working with my TV partners on two different shows to try to get them off the ground. I'm also working on a couple of musicals, sort of a theater thing, a production of *The Acid House* [Welsh's 1994 novel]. With these collaborative projects, they sometimes grow cold and then ignite again. It takes a long time to get to fruition in collaborative projects. It's good to have a couple of books going, so when things cool off I can always go back to the books.

The last time I interviewed you, you were boxing in the mornings. Are you still boxing?

I don't spar, because when you get into your fifties [Welsh is 55] your hand speed is just sort of slow and the other guys that are sparring are

"It's kind of strange, because *Trainspotting* was a pretty subversive book, and they have become these iconic characters in literature and in cinema. It makes me determined to look after them. I want to do justice to them."

When you were writing *Trainspotting*, did you think these characters would be so strong and compelling? It's kind of strange, because it was a pretty subversive book, and we're in the second decade now where they have become these iconic characters in literature and in cinema. I never expected that Renton would become this sort of Holden Caulfield-type character, kind of a rite-of-passage thing for young people getting into books and movies. It makes me more determined to look after them. I want something that's going to do justice to them. But it kind of means a lot more to other people, to be honest, than it does to me. Because as a writer, once you write the book, it's gone. The only things that bring it back are movies and stage plays. Otherwise, it means a lot to people who at a certain time in their life read it. If you're of a certain age and it excites you, it becomes your history and it becomes who you are.

in their twenties; you're going to get your face punched. And that's not a good thing for a writer if you work with your head and need concentration and all that stuff. I do months of nothing but boxing circuit training, then I'll do CrossFit stuff, then I'll do running or weights. I have to get to the gym at least three times a week, usually five. When you sit at a desk all day you have to do something. And I like to party and socialize and go out for a drink. It keeps that at bay as well; if you have to go to the gym the next day, you kind of take it a bit easier on that side of things. It's a good thing to have as a writer because so much of that is about sitting in a chair, and once you get bored with that you sit on the bar stool.

And you look sexy naked if you go to the gym all the time.

My wife is 22 years younger than me, so I've got to look reasonable with my clothes off. ☺

JUSTICE LEAGUE

Black Flag vocalist Henry Rollins is one of many celebrities who used their time and voice to push for justice for the West Memphis Three.

By Kara Wahlgren

Twenty years ago, in 1993, three eight-year-old boys were murdered in small-town Arkansas. With no good leads, and a town desperate for justice, prosecutors painted three teenage outcasts as occultists and sent them to prison—Jessie Misskelley Jr. and Jason Baldwin got life sentences, while Damien Echols ended up on death row. The trio, which became known as the West Memphis Three, had insisted they were innocent, and in 1996 documentarians Joe Berlinger and Bruce Sinofsky released *Paradise Lost: The Child Murders at Robin Hood Hills*. Although the filmmakers maintained neutrality, thousands of people who watched *Paradise Lost* on HBO were convinced that the young men had been wrongfully convicted—and that the real killer was still at large. One of those viewers was punk icon Henry Rollins.

Rollins, along with Johnny Depp, Peter Jackson, and several other celebrities, spent the next several years tirelessly raising money and awareness—as did Berlinger and Sinofsky with their 2000 follow-up, *Paradise Lost 2: Revelations*. In August 2011, after DNA results showed that the West Memphis Three were not the killers, the men worked out a deal in which they admitted the state had evidence that could convict them and were sentenced to time served—more than 18 years.

In her 2012 documentary *West of Memphis*, Amy Berg set out to address the troubling questions that arose from this bittersweet ending for Echols, Misskelley, and Baldwin: How did the system fail six boys? How do you start over after serving 18 years for someone else's crime? Who is the real killer? We talked to Rollins about his role in the release of the West Memphis Three, and—no surprise—he tells us how he really feels about the state of Arkansas.

You've been involved with the West Memphis Three for several years. How did you first learn about this case?

I saw the HBO documentary. Someone gave me a videocassette and said, "You might find this interesting." And I did. These guys were really not getting what they should from American justice.

How did you go from getting angry to getting involved?

When I get angry, I get motivated. I

said, "I'm officially angry, so let's do a benefit show." And then a couple of days after the concert, I said, "Well, let's do a record. Let's go big." I tapped all these cool rock-star pals of mine and put up quite a large amount of my money to make this record [*Rise Above: 24 Black Flag Songs to Benefit the West Memphis Three*]. The summer afterward, we took the music around the world.... That's the start-up money that got the DNA from the crime scene tested. It helped get the ball rolling.

The teens were outsiders because of the way they dressed and the music they listened to. Did you identify with that?

As much as I can identify with anyone from Arkansas. I saw Damien, a thoughtful guy who liked weird music, and went, "Yeah, that describes me and millions of other young Americans." Oh, he scrawled weird things in his notebook—really? That's something you go to court for? That's every tenth grader in America who's mad at anything. I definitely saw myself in them, as a lot of people did—I think that's why this thing became such a groundswell of concern, where people were sending in \$10 bills and doing bake sales.

You kept in touch with Damien while he was in prison. Who first reached out to whom?

I wrote him. I said, "We're doing this crazy record, man—we've got everyone from Iggy Pop to [members of] Slipknot, Motörhead, [and] Queens of the Stone Age to Chuck D and Ice T. Everyone's involved. We remain vigilant and intense and we're not backing off."

Peter Jackson, who produced *West of Memphis*, has also been involved in this cause for years. Did you two ever cross paths?

No, I've never met him. You'd have to pay me a lawyer's fee per hour to sit through *The Hobbit*, but I like where [Jackson] puts his money. You



Thanks to Amy's great work, you have this documentary that should be used in film school, like, "Here's how you make a documentary, son."


What does *West of Memphis* add to the *Paradise Lost* series?

I think it gives it a nice bookend. The final chapter of this thing hasn't been done, in that someone killed three kids. And now it'll be up to the state of Arkansas to see how much they like justice. I'm not going to hold my breath waiting for Arkansas to do anything good—I just think it's a state that's totally corrupt. I'm waiting for them to lose their gills and twitching primordial tails.

The story doesn't really end neatly, even with the guys getting out of jail. What challenges do they face now?

Everything! When you've been living in this weird, closed, biosphere society in prison—when you get out into the world, what is your concept of life, of time, of justice? How do you get on with your life? [Damien's wife] Lorri is an extraordinary person and they have this amazing relationship. So I think Damien wakes up each day with New York outside his window, with this incredible woman, with this part of his life behind him. And all he has is all that you and I have—time, and what you're going to do with it.

Why is this documentary important, even after the guys have been released?

The quest for justice needs to be unquenchable. There are men and women in the prison system right now who are completely innocent. There are some who have been killed by the government who never did the crime. If you really love America, then you've got to look out for more than just your own front yard. 

would hope someone with that kind of money would be doing something cool, like what he did to help out the West Memphis Three. It's outstanding what he did.

Tell us a little bit about the documentary.

Amy could've done 30 percent less work and it still would've been stunning. Most of the interviews she did with the locals in West Memphis—none of those people wanted to be interviewed. A lot of people were recanting testimonies—it's really hard to evince that kind of thing from anyone.



[interview]

THE BRUCE CAMPBELL WAY

The chain saw-wielding, boomstick-carrying cult-film actor opens up about producing the *Evil Dead* remake, his next book, turning down a threesome, and the question he's been fielding for two decades—will there be a sequel to *Army of Darkness*?

By Christine Colby

You took a huge risk remaking what's basically a sacred movie to fans. It's funny how *The Evil Dead* got better when the remake came out. Suddenly, it's a classic. Half of the reviews when that movie came out were devastatingly bad. I look at it as a wonderful time capsule of 1979. I have to say, the fans were violently opposed when the remake was first announced. We appreciate their zeal, but I think most of them have come around. There's going to be a certain percentage of purists, and that's fine, but it's not like we're destroying the negatives of the original. If you want to boycott this one, I guess you can, but I'm not sure what point there'd be, since it was made by us.

I think it made a difference that you, director and screenwriter Sam Raimi, and producer Rob Tapert were involved in it.

It wasn't some cigar-chomping producer looking for a quick buck. It was something we agonized over, and Sam Raimi handpicked the director [Fede Alvarez]. And we didn't want an Ash character because that would torment the fans even more. This is just another rough night with five other people, using the filmmaking tools that we did not have back then. It's not about making an expensive version of *The Evil Dead*—this is still a very modestly budgeted movie. But wouldn't it be better if you had actors who were experienced? Wouldn't it be better if you can't tell how the special effects were done, rather than seeing garden hoses doing the fake blood?

It's the goriest movie I've seen in a long time.

When we set out to make the original *Evil Dead*, we thought, *If we are getting into the film business, let's*

make something that's tried and true, so we decided on horror. If we are going to make it, let's not crap around. We're like, it has to be scary, it has to be bloody, it has to leave these people exhausted. That was our theory of making horror ... but now, this is like the return of the splatter movie. All the rough edges have been rubbed off a lot of modern-day movies, partly due to the rating system. But I really feel that there is a difference between "depressing carnage," which is what I call torture porn, and "exuberant carnage," where you go, "Oh, my God, she's cutting her arm off!" You know, where it's over-the-top. This isn't something that's going to happen in your real lives. It's not some guy carving up women with a butcher knife. This is different—it's fantastic; it's ridiculous.

I was very impressed with Jane Levy's performance as Mia.

She kicked it! She auditioned and then she came back to apologize because she thought she sucked. And we're like, "Jane, you did great, you killed it!" That's the tricky thing about casting these movies—can you put up with the crap? Can you physically do it? Each of these actors, good God, they got vomit in their faces, they're cutting their face off, their limbs are missing. I sent an email out before the movie was filmed to all the cast members: "I just want to let you know what's coming. Be patient, don't party, you've got to get through this." Jane, she was really tough, and it shows ... that's the beauty of movies, it's there forever. Three months of torment—it's gone now, but you've got this as a result. We're very grateful to these actors, because they were better than any of us. I know—I can say that because I was in it.

I'd heard you wouldn't have a role or cameo in this movie, yet if you watch until after the credits, there's a little treat for the fans there.

Fede would not relent. He was like, "Dude, you have to be in this movie! Dude, you have to be the guy who pulls up in the end in the truck." I'm like, "If I show up, the audience is going to be pulled completely out of this movie, and go, 'Oh, there's that guy,' and it will stop it cold." This is his movie, and we didn't want any distraction. So he picked that idea. Yeah, it's a little treat for anyone who is patient enough to sit through the credits.

I read that there might finally be a sequel to *Army of Darkness*, with you as Ash.

You know what, we have sort of rekindled the old "let's do a sequel" conversation. There seems to be a fair amount of interest in the remake, even though fans were a little skeptical, but it showed us how much they would probably embrace it if we did another one. Sam's making the biggest movies in Hollywood, so it's going to be tough to get his attention. I've been doing [*Burn Notice*] for seven years, for God's sake, in Florida, so we have to just find the time. But we finally decided to say, "Never say never." It will be fun having 20 more years of experience to go back and play the character. By the time it comes out, it will be 25 years later.

And Ash will be so tired, just like, "You Deadites are still here? Seriously?"

Exactly. Like, "I'm too old for this shit!" Well, Sam is a visual wizard now, so it will be fun to see what he would bring to it.

Will you write us a "Forum" letter? You must have some stories.

Sure. You know who comes after me? Fanboys—18-year-old fanboys.

But you must have gotten some crazy propositions.

Honestly, N-O, zero. I've never had one proposition for sex at a convention. I did get propositioned during a book tour, because what I've found is books bring the women. They go, "Oh, he is sensitive after all." Since my book *If Chins Could Kill* came out, more women have started to come to these events. I have only been propositioned officially one time, by



two women—they were a pair.

Okay, so there's your "Forum" letter.

There's nothing to write about; it was just a proposition. I was like, I'm on an airplane at 7 A.M. tomorrow, it just ain't going to happen for this middle-aged boy. I get up early and go to bed early these days.

There's still time. Are you aware of the *Evil Dead* porn parody?

Yes. I have not seen it. It's probably the worst thing ever made in the history of civilization.

Will there be a sequel to *Make Love the Bruce Campbell Way*?

I'm doing a sequel to *Chins*. There are way more ridiculous stories now. There's a bit of a travel theme, having filmed a couple of movies in Bulgaria. I also visited the troops in '09, went down there for the show, to Iraq.

What was that like?

Amazing, ridiculous, terrifying, cool, and creepy. They were actually very happy to see Ash show up at a war zone. They all went online, printed out their favorite Ash photos. It was amazing how many of them were clued in to those movies.

I just found out that you are an ordained minister. How many marriages have you performed?

Only one. It was a guy who wanted me to marry him and his bride as zombies. So the bride was a pregnant zombie with a demon baby coming out of her belly.

What does the average person have to do to have you perform their wedding?

Give me a sack of cash. That's all.

Campbell and Theresa Tilly in 1981 (below); Jane Levy in the *Evil Dead* remake (above)



MAD SCIENTIST CUISINE

Twenty-nine-year-old chef Magnus Nilsson can transform a culinary laboratory into a one-of-a-kind dining experience.

By Nicholas Gill

It's the dead of winter. Outside is pure white. Trees are caked in snow. Lakes and rivers are frozen over. The temperature averages about -15 degrees Fahrenheit during the daylight, which only lasts for about four to five hours a day. When the sun is down, you try not to go outside. It's just too cold. It's so cold that your bones ache. Yet it's here, way out in a mountainous, forest-covered corner of Sweden, that you'll find one of the hardest restaurant tables to get anywhere on Earth.

Fäviken Magasinet is far from anywhere. It's almost 500 miles north of Stockholm, plus another \$100 cab ride up a winding, moose-lined road from the nearest train station to the 24,000-acre hunting estate where the remote 14-seat restaurant can be found.

Fäviken's chef, Magnus Nilsson, is only 29. A few years ago he gave up cooking. He had worked for three years in Paris under famed French chef Pascal Barbot at the three-Michelin star L'Astrance. But when Nilsson returned to Sweden, he became frustrated that all of his dishes seemed like copies of Barbot's, and he didn't have access to the same ingredients he'd had in France. He began studying wine and thought he would become a wine writer. He was hired to put together the wine cellar at Fäviken in 2009, but then he ended up being in charge of the kitchen as well.

Over the past couple of years, rumblings have

been felt throughout the food world about this bearded, Viking-looking chef in the north woods who creates food using methods unlike any that have ever been seen before. He'll mature vinegar in the trunk of a burnt-out spruce tree. He'll stuff a hare's cavity with pine branches to keep it from spoiling. It was even rumored that he asked diners to kill a chicken themselves before eating, which turned out to be completely untrue—he butchers everything himself.

A Belgian friend told me that he was at a conference and saw Nilsson. While all the other chefs had brought liquid nitrogen to show off their gimmicky skills at molecular gastronomy, Nilsson brought just white cabbage and everyone was blown away: It wasn't just any white cabbage off the supermarket shelf, but one that had been fermenting for months and tasted unlike any other cabbage they had ever sampled.

IT WAS RUMORED THAT HE ASKED DINERS TO KILL A CHICKEN THEMSELVES, WHICH TURNED OUT TO BE UNTRUE—HE BUTCHERS EVERYTHING HIMSELF.

Nilsson recently wrote a cookbook, *Fäviken* (Phaidon, 2012), but it's practically useless if you expect to actually cook the dishes. The majority of the recipes call for ingredients like marigold petals from last summer or a slice of top-blade steak from a retired dairy cow, dry-aged for nine months. In 2012, *Restaurant* magazine named Fäviken the 34th-best restaurant in the world, though it's almost certain that it will quickly climb its way upward.

In Stockholm there are now five Michelin-starred restaurants, including two-star Frantzén/Lindeberg, named the 20th-best restaurant in the world, which sources most of its ingredients from its own farms and churns its own butter tableside. On the other side of the city is chef Niklas Ekstedt, who went to the same cooking school as Nilsson. He recently opened Ekstedt, a very modern restaurant, which features a redesigned Swedish kitchen from the 1800s. Meals are prepared without electricity, yet it's become one of the hottest tables in the city. Ekstedt is an admirer of Nilsson's.

"He's a young chef living out in the wild, doing his own thing," Ekstedt says. "It fits the Scandinavian image very well."

Close relationships with farmers and fishermen, foraging, and attention to the seasons are founding principles of New Nordic cuisine, yet Nilsson is taking things to extremes. I had to see for myself what all the fuss is about.

After a full day on a train, I arrive at Fäviken about an hour before dinner. I'm staying in one of the rooms above the restaurant, which have been made available for guests, as there aren't many

options nearby. I drop my bags in my room and pop into the sauna for half an hour to loosen up. I walk downstairs for dinner promptly at 7 P.M., as I was told to do when I arrived. I enter a lounge with worn leather armchairs and couches, and a fireplace burning birch wood. A few other guests walk in, and within a few minutes the first glasses of wine are poured and small bites are placed before us.

There's a lump of fresh cheese that was curdled minutes ago, served in warm whey with lavender. Cups formed of dried pig blood are filled with wild trout roe. Lichens that look like they were just picked off the forest floor are fried to a crisp and dipped in a garlic cream. Half a dozen bites appear, each more whimsical than the next. Then the meal starts.

We are led to the upstairs dining room and take our seats. Dishes begin to arrive soon after, and with each course Nilsson enters the room and claps. Scallops are grilled alive on a bed of burning juniper right before us. *Clap!* A fermented turnip broth is filtered through moss so it tastes like the forest floor. *Clap!* A brontosaurus-size femur bone is sawed open in the center of the room and its marrow mixed with raw heart. *Clap!* Berries preserved like his grandmother's. *Clap!* Sour-milk sorbet. *Clap!* Eighteen courses paired with five drinks, including homemade mead. *Clap! Clap! Clap!*

Downstairs. Fireside. Snacking on a box of sweets with a glass of duck-egg liqueur that's a little like eggnog. After dinner, I chat with a Scottish couple that has been apprenticing at the restaurant for the past six weeks. They've been in the kitchen



Chef Magnus Nilsson



Scallops on smoking juniper branches



A dish of skate

during service before, but they just ate here for the first time. Previously, they thought some of the dishes weren't that interesting or didn't seem to fit with a \$400 menu. Afterward, they understood.

"You see it and you're like, 'What the fuck is this?'" said one. "Then you eat it and you're like, 'Goddamn it, Magnus. You're right.'"

We discuss a leek course. For the most part, it's just one leek on a plate with a little bit of cream and dried, grated cod roe. As we're talking, Nilsson sits down. He tells me the leek was frozen outside in a box lined with sand for several months. It's just steamed in the kitchen, but on the plate it's basically dying before our eyes. There's an odd reaction going on as we eat. It's not just a leek, but a leek at a singular, particular moment in its life.

Then there's the duck. "We don't really have a history of great duck in Scandinavia," Nilsson tells me. He's trying to change that. His Roanne and Swedish heritage breeds come from his friend Peter Blombergsson down the road, who also forages for mushrooms and some plants. Usually ducks are slaughtered after 16 weeks. Blombergsson and Nilsson are letting them live two years, until they're adults. The flavor is more concentrated. Nilsson experiments with cows, too. He's tested out butchering older cows and ages the cuts longer than usual.

Nilsson is extremely confident—maybe even a little cocky. He's friendly, but serious. He knows exactly what he's doing. I ask him why he didn't just open a Fäviken in the south of France.

"I'm sure I could make a great restaurant in the south of France," Nilsson says. "But it wouldn't be this restaurant. This restaurant could only exist here."

He thinks most chefs have just one great


restaurant in them. He doesn't see himself opening ten restaurants, like David Chang. That's not who he is. This is it. After Fäviken runs its course, whenever that may be, he'll give up cooking. But not yet.

"There are still some more things we would like to do here," Nilsson says. "I'll keep doing this until it's finished."

The next morning I follow Pam, one half of the Scottish couple, to go pick juniper branches. We trek about a mile into the snow and chat about how restaurants are changing. Michelin stars are popping up in laid-back bistros and rustic farmhouses. Pam and her partner plan on opening a restaurant off the Scottish coast using some of the principles they learned here, as the climate is quite similar. When we finally find the juniper, it's buried under several feet of snow.

The tiny team of chefs is out in the wilderness every day. There's always something to collect. They hunt, harvest, and preserve the ingredients for the restaurant by hand. Ingredients are fermented, pickled, aged, and grilled over open flames rather than using the latest kitchen technology. Cooking is secondary. It's the reverse of what most of the world's great restaurants are doing.

Pam has to climb into the middle of the juniper patch. She dusts the snow off every bush as gently as one would pet a newborn kitten. She spends more time examining the branches than actually picking them.

"Magnus wants very specific juniper, not just any old branch," she says. It has to be dense and conical. She's careful not to damage the branches she's not using, because their time will come, too. In the world of Fäviken Magasinet, every ingredient has its moment—eventually. 



Fäviken Magasinet

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lace lovers

Raven and Layla adore wearing black lace lingerie almost as much as they like seeing it on each other. But when the ladies in question look this hot, and are this into each other, it's easy to see why they just can't resist stripping off those bits of lace to get closer.

Photographs by Preston Geoffrey Parker





















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HOME

Being married to a soldier who's stationed overseas can be hard on a marriage. One army wife finds that video chats and a vivid imagination are the next best thing to having her man back home.

I touch the face of the computer screen; his image is so close, so close that, for a second, he doesn't seem so far away. How far away again is Afghanistan? I remind myself that it's 7,500 miles—a 15-hour flight. He's almost half a day ahead, in another world. He says he is going on another mission tomorrow. His smile is strained; he looks tired. He says, "Don't worry."

I nod, try to smile, try to be strong. He leans forward, searching my face.

"I'm coming home soon, baby."

"I know," I say, blinking back tears.

"And when I do, you know the first thing I'm going to do?"

"What?" I ask.

"I am going to hug you so tight you'll think I won't ever let go. And then I'm going to look into your sweet brown eyes and kiss you, and once I get you home, we won't leave that bed for days, if you know what I'm saying."

He laughs and I smile, feeling the

By Michelle Augello-Page • Illustrations by Charlene Chua

knot in my chest loosen a little bit. He continues talking softly, seductively, as if whispering a secret, words of desire. His voice is hypnotic, rising and falling, turning me on with visions and images of what he'll do to me. A sharp inhale, a deep exhale, the thrill of excitement, our feverish breath.

"And all you'll be wearing is a pair of high heels—a pair of shiny black fuck-me pumps, and not much else. When I get home, I'm going to buy you a sexy red corset, candy-apple red, with a matching thong, and we won't even come up for air, we've got so much catching up to do. When I get home, I'm going to love you right proper, like a husband should. Understand me?"

"Yes."

"Yes, what?"

"Yes, sir," I say shyly, sitting up a little straighter.

"That's better."

He clears his throat and quickly glances at his watch.

"Now stand up so I can see all of you. I need to go soon, but I want to see you before we get offline."

Even though we try to talk on the videocam at least once a week, and

I always wear sexy things under my robe, we usually just talk. Sometimes other officers are around, and he wouldn't take the chance to expose either one of us. But every once in a while, when the coast is clear, he gives me this intimacy.

I stand up and move slightly away from the computer. I let the robe fall to the floor and reveal myself to him. I look at the screen and can tell that he's unzipping his pants. I feel a hot surge inside, thinking about him touching himself while looking at me. I slowly turn around, feeling suddenly stronger, sexier. The air is cool against my bare skin. I run my hands along the smooth curve of my waist and hips, down my legs until I touch the tips of my toes. I arch my back so that my butt points up in the air and lightly smack my ass. My golden-brown hair brushes the floor.

"You're so pretty," he says.

Eyeing the screen, I smile, seeing his reaction, his thick, hard cock pushing through his hand, being caressed and pulled in a rhythmic, rocking movement. How I wish he was here and that his hand was my hand. How I wish he was here so that I could please him, so he could take his pleasure from me.

I touch my breasts; my nipples are hard between my fingers. I cup my breasts with my hands, sweet, ripe fruit aching to be tasted. I squeeze the soft, firm flesh and moan, thinking of him licking and sucking my nipples, teasing me with his teeth and tongue. He watches me with intent. His hand doesn't stop. His penis is thick and solid, fully erect, swollen with anticipation and yearning.

"Touch yourself," he says. "I want to see you." His voice is a deep rasp. He doesn't take his eyes off me.

"Yes, sir," I say, moving the chair and sitting on the edge of it. My toes are a flash of color as I curve my ankles around the sides of the chair, forcing me to spread my legs open to him.

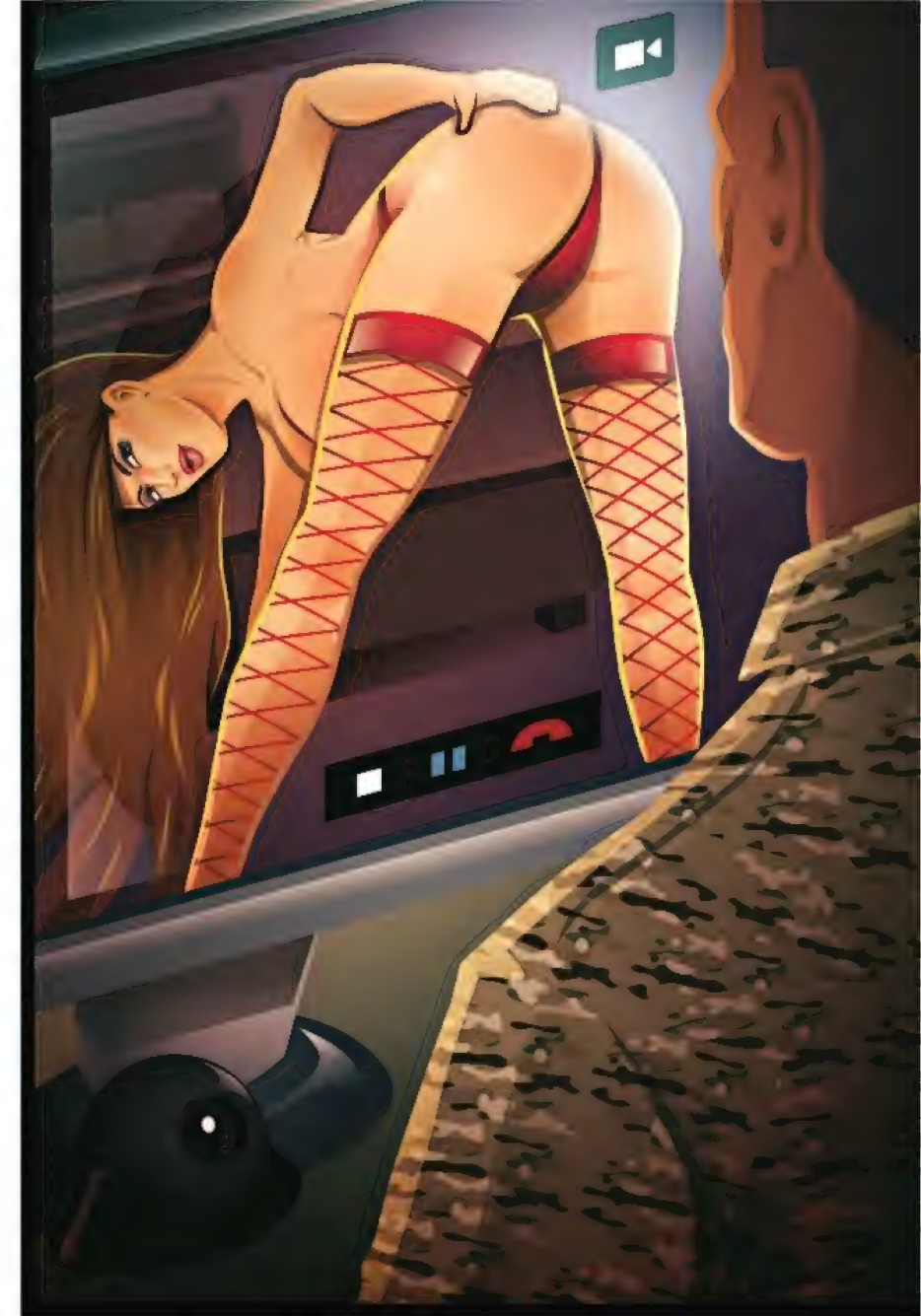
I press my hand against the soft folds of my vagina, gently feeling the smooth skin. The excitement stirring between my thighs is torture. I want his long, thick cock taking me. I want his fingers and hands and mouth all over me. I want to press against his body, to feel his skin, naked and hot, yielding. I want him to hold me, to explore me, to discover me. I want to sleep in his waking dreams, to awaken at his touch. I am sticky, wet with desire. I want him so much. I want him here with me.

"I need you," I say. "I need to feel you inside me."

He moans and I bite my lip, touching my clitoris, finger-painting the nub, the heart sticky-sweet with lust and my honeyed nectar. I lick my lips slowly and close my eyes, my climax rising, beginning to peak and flush, blooming with the warmth of my desire. I am watching him watching me.

He breathes in deeply and sharply. Tension and relief play across his face as he comes rapidly, ejaculating his release with a deep sigh.

"I'm sorry that was so quick," he says, cleaning himself up. "It's been a



while." He laughs. "Did you come?"

"A little bit," I say, honestly.

"After we get offline, I want you to come really hard, thinking of how good it's going to be when I come home."

"Yes, sir," I smile.

"You know," he says, "I'm a lucky man to have you. Not everyone over here has someone like you, as beautiful and sweet and sexy as you."

I blush, so thankful to have this amazing man hold my heart. He always knows what to say to make me feel like the most special woman in the world.

"And that's what keeps me going over here, day in and day out, because even though I love my country, and I have a job to do here, I'm in hell. And you are my heaven, understand me?" I nod, so grateful for his love I suddenly feel overwhelmed with emotion. I laugh as tears drop from

my eyelashes.

"Don't you ever worry that I'm not coming home. I know I'm coming home, because I'm coming home to you."

I take a deep breath. I say, "I love you."

"I love you, too."

This is how we end our conversations; we never say "good-bye." His eyes are sad, but he flashes me a brilliant smile. He says he loves me one more time, and the screen goes blank. I continue to sit on the chair, not wanting to break the spell. My joy turns silent, heavy with sadness. A moment ago, his voice filled the room. Now the room is empty and

I RUN MY HANDS ALONG MY WAIST AND DOWN MY LEGS. I ARCH MY BACK AND LIGHTLY SMACK MY ASS.

quiet. I feel so alone.

This is always the worst part, ending the conversation and not knowing when I will speak to him again. *If I will ever...* I think, then push the thought far from my mind. For the first few months of his deployment, I was a mess. I missed him so much, if there was a way I could have folded myself into one of my care packages to him, I would have.

Each day I mark the calendar with an X, marking this first year without him, my husband, my love. I go to work, I go out with friends. I eat, sleep, breathe. I am here, still knowing that he is in a world I can barely imagine, a world of instability and chaos, a world where some soldiers die in the line of duty and never come home. Each day I mark the passage of time and pray for his safe return.

It's the little things that get to me. Seeing couples walking hand in hand, kissing, laughing, doing stupid things like shopping for groceries. Meeting someone new and telling them I'm married, then seeing their face change into the inevitable shocked "Oh" when they discover my husband is in Afghanistan. Watching the news, anything to do with the Middle East, has me glued to the television, panic in my head, wondering, *Is he okay? Is he safe?* Waiting days for a phone call.

And even though I knew what I signed up for when we married, I wasn't prepared for the void that was created when he was actually deployed and our relationship depended on phone calls, emails, and care packages. Seeing each other over the video camera is a special treat because computer access isn't always guaranteed. But it also makes me miss him more than ever.

I lie across the bed and close my eyes. I try to remember how he looked. Tired, a little thin. Excited to see me. Happy that I put on one of the outfits under my robe. He called me his little tease, his sweet girl, his sexy woman. He wants me to continue where we left off, but I don't want to

touch myself. I want him to touch me. I want him to walk through the door and take me, the way he used to.

The way he will, I think, opening my robe, *when he comes home* ... in his crisp dress blues with the shiny buttons, matched by the shining sloe black of his shoes. I love how he looks in full uniform, so strong and masculine, heroic. His body is toned and fit, and the uniform accentuates his broad shoulders and long legs. Every step he takes is purposeful, self-assured, confident. His smile could light a room.

I imagine him home. I kneel before him, struck by his stature, and slowly undress him. First his shoes, then his socks. I would wash his feet with my tears and dry them with my hair. I want to kiss his ankles, his toes, the arch and ball of each foot; I want to kiss the places he touches on the ground.

Working my way upward, I unfasten his belt, pull it through the loop and offer it to him. He smiles and gently swats my ass with the leather strap. We laugh and I remove his pants, then his jacket, shirt, and tie. I look into his eyes, no longer laughing, as he loops the belt around my waist, pulling me toward him so he can kiss me. His tongue dances across my lips, in my mouth, and I feel the hardness of his erection pressing hot against my body.

He drops the belt and touches my breasts with his strong, capable hands. My nipples harden, begging to be kissed, pinched, sucked. I want him so much. He wants to take his time. He's teasing me, running his fingers lightly over my skin. I giggle and laugh, so ticklish I jump. He touches me harder and a moan escapes from somewhere inside me. I am light-headed, filled with want.

"I want you to please me," he says.

It is a command. He knows I love it

when he takes control. The familiar response reaches my lips as a flush of heat rushes across my body.

"Yes, sir."

I am eager to obey and fall into place in front of him. I take his penis into my mouth, admiring the length and thickness of it. I suck him like a piece of hard candy, explore his tight skin with my lips and tongue. I feel his hands on my head, grasping my hair, rocking me back and forth as his cock glides in and out of my mouth. The head is glistening, pushing deeply through my lips, and I am ravenous, hungry with desire. I am tasting him, feeling his smooth hardness inside my mouth. He is a delicacy, an erotic feast just for me. I am worshipping his cock, and he is breathing harder, faster, and then he stops, pulling me upward tenderly by my hair.

We are face-to-face, eye to eye, so close I feel his breath on my lips. He kisses me, lavishing me with his lustful mouth. His lips touch my cheeks, my eyes, my forehead. He is reading me with his hands, memorizing the features of my face, touching me the way the blind see. He picks me up and lays me across the bed, the altar of desire, and leaves no part of my body untouched. He sucks and bites my flesh, licking and savoring the taste of me, then dresses my naked body with butterfly kisses so soft I tremble.

He holds me tightly in a full embrace. He is here, *here!* I cling to him, afraid that if I let go for a second he might disappear. His eyes are flecked with gold and brown, the center is dark with desire. He is flushed, feverish. I run my hands along his smooth, strong back, letting my fingernails gently scratch the surface of his skin. My body is on fire. I feel the heat between my legs rising.

"I need you," I say. "Please, sir."

Hearing my own voice beg him makes me even hotter. My heart is beating wildly. I am dripping wet and open with longing. I am breathless; I can barely speak.

I whisper, "I need to feel you inside me—deep inside me."



He crushes my body with his. He is above me on his knees; his cock is impatient, pushing lightly against my pussy. I open my legs wider, wrapping myself around him. He pulls my wrists above my head, holding my hands, our fingers entwined. His skin is pressed against my skin, his breath is my breath. He enters me slowly. He is torturing me. I feel the thrill of his cock pushing into my moist cunt.

It feels so good that I cry out loudly. His dick is electric, hard and thick, driving inside me with masterful control. He moves slowly, deliberately, lingering with delight as he watches my face respond to his every touch. My eyes are half-closed, lips open, sighing and moaning a song of ecstasy. He thrusts inside me and waves of pleasure take me further and further into bliss.

We move together as one, curling our sweetness into a ball, basking in the wonder, in the delight of our lovemaking. I no longer know where my body ends and his begins.

He falls into me and we rest for a moment, panting. His excitement is at a fevered pitch. He pulls me on top of him and a rush of cool air surrounds us. His cock is swollen and rigid, inexhaustible. He rests inside me, fitting into me like a puzzle piece, perfectly. He spans my ass, demanding I cry out again as each slap leaves a lingering sting and a ripple of pleasure through my body.




HIS COCK IS IMPATIENT, PUSHING AGAINST MY PUSSY. I OPEN MY LEGS, WRAPPING MYSELF AROUND HIM.

Placing his hands on my tingling butt cheeks, he lifts me up and down on his cock furiously. I am riding his torrential current; his balls slap my ass. My clitoris is being rubbed in just the right way as he rocks me up and down. He is controlling my every movement as I twist with pleasure. I throw my head back as I feel him suddenly grow harder. He tells me to come, and just hearing his command is enough to

put me over the edge.

I feel his throbbing cock stroking me deeply as he takes me harder, fucking me fast with hot, hot fury. I am shivering, swelling with pleasure, rising and falling, holding on to him in a tight embrace. Our bodies are slick, scorched with heat and beads of sweat. I shudder and scream in a violent sob of climax so deep and complete I shake, breaking into joy. He roars and releases, coming deep inside me, flooding me with hot fluid. We are body, arms and legs and skin, flushed with fevered brightness. We are twin flames, vibrating rays of sun, light encircled with love. He is

my husband, my lover, the prayer on my lips. Light-years away, he sends a wish across the desert. He whispers into the wind, sending a kiss across the luminous sky, saying my name. He calls me home. 

"Home," by Michelle Augello-Page, from *Duty and Desire: Military Erotic Romance*, edited by Kristina Wright. Published by Cleis Press, 2012.

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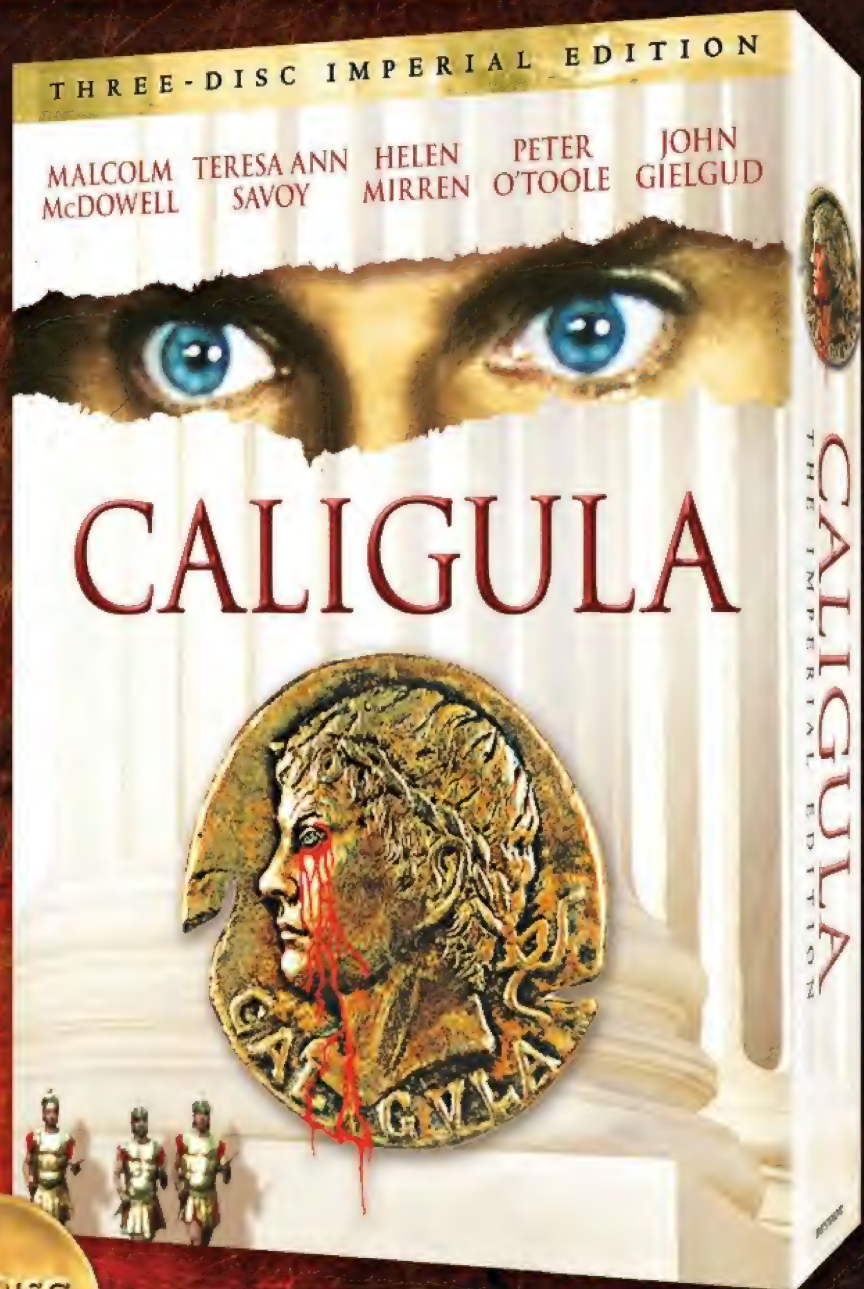
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UNLOCK THE LIFESTYLE OF

Bettie Page

In Her Own Words

There have been films about the legendary pinup model Bettie Page, including a Hollywood rendition starring Gretchen Mol, but, for the first time, Ms. Page is speaking for herself.

By Christine Colby



Page giggled her way through even the most strenuous bondage and domination shoots.

Bettie Page Reveals All!, a documentary written, produced, and directed by Mark Mori, is narrated by Page personally, in audio interviews recorded by Mori in 1996 and 1999. He was “in the right place at the right time,” he says—Mori’s association with Page came about because his lawyer was “Bettie’s lawyer’s lawyer.” He was allowed unprecedented access, and claims that anyone else would have had difficulty getting to her. Mori met with Page many times and came to consider her a friend. They exchanged Christmas cards over the years, and he visited her in the hospital a week before she died, on December 11, 2008. He was also granted the exclusive right to film at Page’s funeral, which was attended by vintage vixen Tempest Storm and modern-day temptress Dita Von Teese, among others, and can be seen in the documentary.

Von Teese in particular really emphasized Page’s influence on the world and pop culture to Mori. Initially, Von Teese didn’t consider herself that attractive, she told Mori, but, inspired by Page, she remade her image and became the most famous burlesque performer in the world. Page is, as Mori says, “the patron saint of so many subcultures—tattoo, rockabilly, fashion, the gay community, and comic books.” Her influence really can’t be overstated.

Page infamously disappeared at the peak of her career, only to be located eventually through the efforts of such fans as *The Rocketeer*’s Dave Stevens and pinup artist and *The Betty Pages* publisher Greg Theakston, who was the first to repopularize her photos in the late eighties. Theakston says of Mori’s film, “It continues the work I started and fills out her story well. And that voice—old Southern-lady gravel, punctuated by chuckles. It’s a peek into the mind

of the Queen of Curves.”

Page’s life away from the spotlight had always been a mystery. Now we learn that part of that time was spent in an institution, as a genetic predisposition for paranoid schizophrenia got the better of her. She lived ten years of her adult life there, hearing the voices of “demons” and undergoing shock treatment. Hearing her tell these tales herself, with her personality and razor-sharp wit coming through, is a revelation.

She also talks about having been molested by her father and sexually assaulted by a group of men in early adulthood. She doesn’t wallow in these stories, though, mentioning them and moving on. Despite being a survivor of sexual abuse, she is incredibly sex-positive. All of her lovers and husbands who are interviewed in the film comment on what a wonderful sex partner she was, and how much she enjoyed it. (She married four times, twice to the same husband, but all her marriages ended in divorce.) Page was also a born-again Christian who remained unashamed of her career, not being able to imagine that God would find anything wrong with her nudity or bondage modeling. She proudly wore extremely skimpy bikinis before they were in vogue (she had to design and make them herself, as they weren’t available in stores at the time), speaks of her modeling with a joyous pride, a happy satisfaction with her healthy body, and advocates “air baths”—being nude at home with the windows open. She even considered joining a nudist colony, she told Mori. She giggled her way through even the most strenuous bondage and domination photo shoots, thinking of them as acting, and all in good fun. She never judged any of fetish photographer Irving Klaw’s clients for their kinks, and was always happy to act out requests. Mori emphasizes that during their interviews, she was forthcoming about anything he asked her about. He says, “She had inner strength that overcame all of her bad experiences. It was the force of her personality and her lack of ... judgment, her innocence ... that is the key to who she is.”

Bettie Page Reveals All! won best documentary in February 2013 at the CineKink Film Festival. For more information, check out BettiePageMovie.com.



Bush Policies

Perhaps you've heard of Movember, the burgeoning movement to promote awareness of such men's health issues as testicular and prostate cancer. To get involved, you simply register clean-shaven on November 1, then grow a mustache for the entire month, grooming it as outré as you can. Your supporters pledge money, and you effectively become a walking billboard for cancer research. It may be funny, but it's no joke: In 2011, Movember raised \$120 million, and it's gone from humble origins in Melbourne, Australia, to a worldwide movement.

Well, now there's a female version coming at us out of Canada. Called "Julyna" because it rhymes with vagina, it has women styling "the hair down there" to raise both funds and awareness of HPV and cervical cancer.

The brainchild of Toronto nurse Vanessa Wilson, 29, Julyna has gained acceptance by the Canadian Cancer Society as a legitimate charitable cause.

Some criticize the movement as being overly flippant about a very serious women's health issue. Others—mostly men—complain that participants do not let them verify the pubic hairstyles they are asked to support. This seems to us a legitimate complaint. You can see a Movember mustache; you ought to be able to see a Julyna pubic 'do. I'm just sayin'. —Amos Moses

PHOTOGRAPH (HISTORY LESSON) COURTESY OF TASCHEN

DIAN HANSON'S HISTORY OF PIN-UP MAGAZINES

VOL. 2



History Lesson

Taschen editor Dian Hanson presents the history of spicy newsstand reading in a boxed set of three hardcover volumes, comprising more than 800 pages. Beginning in 1900, when the ladies were illustrated, through the end of the sixties—69 years of pulchritudinous publications—*Dian Hanson's History of Pin-up Magazines* is educational and ogle-able.

Despite being full of arousing images, this set is safe for gifting, bookshelf display, and perusing with a porn-shy partner, as Hanson left out the more raunchy titles, focusing on the less hard-core examples, such as *Spicy*, *Peep Show*, *Bachelor*, and, of course, *Penthouse*. In fact, she devotes a whole chapter to the history of *Penthouse* and our founder, Bob Guccione; his confrontational approach to erotica; and points out that *Penthouse* was the first publication in America to picture pubic hair.

Another point Hanson makes is the influence that wars have had on pinup history, as GIs travel to other countries and are exposed to new things they might not encounter at home. Also, some men's magazines were founded in an attempt to recapture the masculine, and sometimes off-color, camaraderie that veterans missed once they were out of the service.

This is a well-researched and gorgeously printed set that will make a worthy addition to any collection. —Christine Colby

CARNAL KNOWLEDGE

Whether you're looking for tips to improve your performance between the sheets, answers to a question or two, or help with an issue you can't take to even your most trusted friend, our expert can help. It's time to get schooled.

By Martin Downs, M.P.H.



■ Quack Apps

I've seen some smartphone apps that are supposed to diagnose sexually transmitted diseases. Are they reliable?

Based on what I've seen, I would think not. I probably haven't seen all of them, but those I have checked out worry me to the point that I don't want to name them.

One app promises a "probable diagnosis" of an STD based on a "deductive logic system"—in other words, a series of yes-or-no questions. Another deductive logic system you may know is a game called 20 Questions.

I wouldn't have a problem with this if the developer had called it an "STD risk quiz," or a "screening tool" or something. Using the word "diagnosis" is misleading, even if it's qualified by "probable." I hated to spend the \$3.99 it cost to download the app, but I had to try it. First it asked if I was male or female. Okay, male. The next question was about genital or anal itching. Not today. No. Next, I was asked if I had any "skin lumps, ulcers, or other raised lesions." It didn't ask if I had a *genital* skin lump, but whatever. Maybe I have a lump somewhere. Probably. I think. Yes. Then it asked if I had "a single firm, painless, craterlike ulcer." That's exactly how it's worded. Do I? What is that? I don't know. So I answered yes. My "most likely diagnoses" based

on these answers: primary syphilis and lymphogranuloma venereum (a bacterial infection of the lymph nodes in the groin).

Seriously? Just like that? I'd like to hear from any doctor who would make a "probable diagnosis" of syphilis based on those answers and nothing else. According to the CDC's STD case definitions, a "probable" case of syphilis requires a positive blood test.

Another app lets you take a picture of a bump or sore on your junk that you think might be an STD, and submit it for review. For \$5 you can get a medical *opinion*—not a diagnosis. According to the app developer, dermatologists review cases and respond based on their expert knowledge of skin lesions, as well as other relevant facts submitted with the pictures.

Okay, that's better than a guessing game. But this one concerns me even more. Whether intended or not, it gives the impression that STDs mainly show up on the skin of the genital area.

In fact, many people with STDs don't have any noticeable signs or symptoms. Genital herpes, for example, sometimes causes sores on the genitals. But most people with genital herpes don't show any symptoms, or the signs are too vague and mild to cause them any concern.

The first symptom of syphilis infection is indeed a small, painless craterlike sore at the site of infection. The sore goes away in three to six weeks, with or without treatment. Now, if you're a dude and the sore is right on the head of your penis, you'll probably notice it. But if a syphilis sore appears in some odd nook of your nether region, it may go unnoticed before it disappears.

British scientists are working on a gadget that could be really helpful: a small chip that can detect STDs like gonorrhea and chlamydia in urine. You'd pee on the chip, plug it into your smartphone, and get a result. The product isn't out yet—although Q has probably supplied James Bond with a prototype.



PHOTOGRAPH BY (CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT) PETER DAZELEY/GETTY IMAGES; KEITH BROFSKY/GETTY IMAGES; JORG GREUEL/GETTY IMAGES



XL

I've always used regular-size condoms, but just out of curiosity I tried using a large-size one. It didn't seem to be too big. But regular condoms don't seem too tight, either. How big does a guy have to be to need a large condom?

There isn't an exact measurement that "qualifies" you for a larger condom. But how a condom fits matters not only for pleasure, but also for safety. A condom that's too tight-fitting may be more likely to break.

Standard condoms sold in the United States are made to fit average-size guys. According to numerous surveys, the average American penis (erect) is about six inches long and five inches in girth (circumference). Most regular-size condoms measure just over seven inches from base to tip when rolled out fully, and a little more than four inches in girth. Large-size condoms are not much bigger than standard ones—typically not more than an inch longer and a

quarter-inch bigger around.

A large-size condom might fit you better if your erect penis measures longer than seven inches from base to tip, or more than five inches around at its widest point.

Let's say your penis has a girth of $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches and is precisely 6 inches long. Does that mean you aren't eligible to wear a larger-caliber condom? Not at all. As long as your penis is wider than the condom at the base, you could wear it.

By the same token, if you measure $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches around, you may feel comfortable using a regular-size condom.

Condoms are made to stretch. A standard condom can fit the largest human penis. But several studies have shown that standard condoms may be more prone to break during sex when penis girth exceeds five inches.


An erect penis is most commonly widest at the head. But penises come in a variety of shapes and sizes. In some men, the shaft is the widest part. Less commonly, the base is widest, or the girth doesn't vary

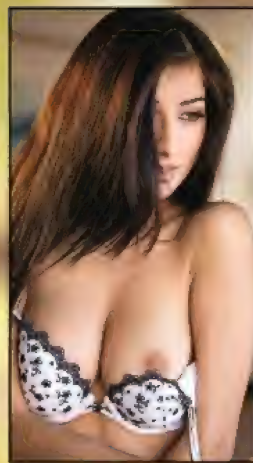
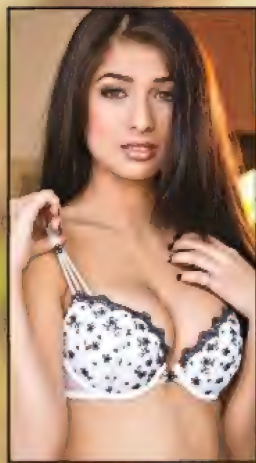
along the length.

Most large-size condoms have extra room around the head, but are about the same size as standard condoms at the base. A guy with a very thick shaft might feel pinched even in an extra-large condom.

The best thing to do is to try on lots of different condoms and see what feels best.

Some people like to buy their condoms online because it's discreet (no sales clerk to avoid eye contact with). You can order online from most major drugstore chains, Amazon.com, and websites specializing in condoms. Sites like Condomania.com also let you see a picture of the actual condoms, unwrapped and unrolled. That's a plus, because shapes vary among brands.

Coripa condoms (available at Coripa.com and from other online retailers) are an option for guys seeking a tailored fit. They come in 55 sizes. Coripa even provides a special ruler you can print from your computer to find your size. 



teenage dream

Nineteen-year-old Megan Salinas hails from Dallas, right smack in the heart of the land where everything's bigger, but the stunning brunette stands only five feet three inches. Still, we predict that her girl-next-door sex appeal and mouthwatering 34C rack will make her a giant in the world of adult entertainment.

Photographs by Mark Lit for Digital Desire



"I'm pretty new to the adult industry, of course, since I just turned 19, but I love it. I've met a lot of great people!"






"Getting into the porn business meant taking a chance, but the most daring thing I've ever done is jump off a cliff into the water."



"The most amazing sex I've ever had was outside at a park. We were by the playground at night, which was really fun."







"I like being outdoors. My idea of a perfect date is talking a walk on the beach, then having a picnic."

SEE MORE OF MEGAN AT PENTHOUSE.COM.



Paddle Play

*A hot tale from
Letters to
Penthouse XXXV:
Please Me, Spank Me,
published by Grand
Central Publishing.*



I was only joking when I whacked him with it. It happened right after Richard said, "What is that?" I'd pulled the small paddleball from the goody bag my friend Melissa had given me on our way out the door.

"An extra goody bag from the party. For the kid who didn't show up." Then I whacked him with the paddle. "Don't know why she gave it to me, but I'm not complaining."

"Let me see." He held out his big hand and all the hair rose up on my neck. Thinking about putting that paddle in his hand suddenly felt important—and exciting.

"Why?" I put it behind my back, leaning in so we were face-to-face. I was so close that I could see the stubble poking through his skin and the full lushness of his mouth.

"Because I said so," was his answer. Another oddity. He wasn't usually clipped and brisk with me. But it made my body come alive and my brain snap to attention. My pussy grew wet, and a steady thump pulsed between my legs.

"Please?" I teased. But then I held my breath.

"I don't say 'please,'" Richard said, staring me down with his chocolate-brown eyes. "You say 'please.'"

He held his hand out again, palm up, and waited.

I placed the paddle in his hand without another word.

"I don't know why I never thought to get one of these for us," he said conversationally, snapping off the

thin piece of elastic that held the red rubber ball. The ball dropped to the floor and bounced away merrily, trailing its cheap elastic tail behind it. "Pull your pants down, doll," he said.

I studied his face, waiting to see any indication that he was joking. None came.

"What? Why?" I stammered. I was mortified that he intended to use that cheap wooden paddle on me. But under it all, I was also aroused like I hadn't been in ages—so much so that I felt a warm slide of fluid rush from my cunt. I shifted, trying to hide my surprise, but that only made my sudden need worse—and he chuckled as if he could read my mind. I was almost certain he could.

"Because I said so. You get four smacks for disobeying me when I asked for it, and now you get four more for questioning me. Want to go for an even dozen?"

As I watched, he reached out and pinched my right nipple between his big fingertips. It stood out hard and ready, even through my thin red tee and my soft-cup bra. A moan nearly escaped me, but I swallowed it down.

He grinned. "Now."

I opened my mouth to balk and then shut it with a snap as he smirked. He meant it, and I certainly did not want to feel the bite of that wood against my ass 12 times.

I wondered briefly why I was playing along with his madness, but deep down I knew. I wanted it just as much as he did. And after he was done, I wanted him to fuck me.

I turned fast, pushing down my black slacks and my pink panties so that they pooled around my ankles. I could just see the tips of my orange flip-flops and my pink nail polish. Somehow it gave me something to focus on. I pushed my forearms to the center island in our kitchen and blew out a breath when I realized I was holding it.

"Ready?" he asked.

I opened my mouth to answer and the first blow landed—a sharp, stinging slap. Pain zipped and zipped under my skin, quickly turning to pleasure. Before I could totally register the sensation, the paddle came down with a smart report on the opposite cheek. A cry escaped me, and I heard Richard chuckle again.

He crisscrossed the first blow with the third, and the second mark with a fourth. My ass felt branded. Blood rushed in my ears and deafened me to any other sound, until he paused to say against my neck, "That was four, sweetheart. You did well. Let's see what it did to you."

His thick finger pushed against my wet slit and slid inside me effortlessly. I gasped, curling my fingers to the dark marble countertop. Richard added a second finger, rubbing my G spot eagerly. Then he added a third and thrust up hard to fill me. Just as sweet release was rushing toward me, he pulled his fingers free.

"I'd say that did good things to you. Do you agree?"

He waited, actually expecting me

to answer. I nodded dumbly, bobbing my head until he said, "Out loud."

"Yes," I agreed.

"Good girl."

I smiled, and that's when the fifth blow fell, coming down on already tender skin, making it pop with pain before flooding with pleasure. My cunt flexed around nothing at all as the sixth blow fell and I cried out, loud enough to startle myself. We'd never done this before—I don't know how—so it was a surprise to notice that once the bite of discomfort left, pleasure bloomed in its wake. And that I liked it.

"Count off the last two for me." He growled his words, pressing his body to mine. I felt the hard length of his cock press into the split of my ass. My skin thumped and bumped with heat, and my heart followed suit.

"Seven," I moaned as the paddle struck me again, blazing fire along my posterior.

He grunted and my nipples spiked with arousal. He was losing his control, and it made me insane with lust.

"Eight," I uttered softly, as the final blow landed.

Then it was just a whisper of zipper and jeans and movement as he crushed himself against me, sliding his cock between my legs without entering me. He dragged his length along my wetness until we both couldn't stand it, and then he kicked my legs apart a bit wider and entered me. It was an effortless entry. One rough thrust and he was in, seated deep and moving with intent.

I pushed back to meet him, my body already so close to coming that

I was on the verge of tears. At that point, I didn't just *want* to get off. I *needed* to get off.

"You were a good girl," he informed me, and the praise only made my cunt clench tighter. I hung my head and pushed back to take him as deeply as I could.

When his fingers found my clitoris and he worked me with deliberately rough strokes, I was done for.

"I'm going to come," I whispered—a soft, shy whisper that was barely audible. But he did hear me, because his free hand tickled up my spine to burrow in my hair. He clenched the length of my ponytail to hold me tight as he rammed into me just a bit harder, a bit faster.

Then he pinched my clit, released it, and rubbed a few more times. I shouted to the ceiling because he still held my hair in his fist. My body rocked with the force of my release, and my pussy milked him as he continued to drive into me. Richard went still and grunted, and then he let my hair go, pushing his teeth to the back of my shoulder as he came.

Silence filled the kitchen. There was no sound but our panting breath. I started to laugh and he followed suit, his warm hands cupping one of my breasts through my tee. He was still buried balls-deep inside me, and he moved just a bit. Tiny blips of pleasure sounded deep in my body.

"So... what else is in that bag?" he asked.

"I really don't know," I said. "But we're definitely keeping that paddle."
—R.H., via email

He dragged his length along my wetness until we both couldn't stand it, and then he kicked my legs apart and entered me. One rough thrust and he was in, seated deep and moving with intent.



Poker Night

When I was in college, my roommate introduced me to his girlfriend Maddie and her roommate Carly, a flame-haired spitfire. Later, when Jeff and I moved to an apartment near the girls, we all started hanging out together. One night we invited them over for pizza, beer, and a game of strip poker. After a few hands, Jeff suggested we play the way he and Maddie played with some of their other friends: The winner chooses which article of clothing the other players must discard. When a player is about to get naked, the winner's instructions usually involve intimate acts, like making out, fondling, or masturbating.

We started the game, and once everyone was naked, I had to suck on Maddie's breasts while Jeff watched. When Maddie won, I had to suck on Carly's tits. Then Jeff had Carly go down on me. Next, Carly had Jeff and Maddie fuck in front of us. When I won, I had Maddie go down on me while I munched on Carly's snatch.

Before the final hand, we all agreed that the winner's choice should be an act that included everyone. I won, so I told Jeff to fuck Maddie again and, while Maddie sucked me off, I ate out Carly again. It was great and lasted a few glorious minutes before we all fell into a sweaty heap. Then Jeff and Maddie slipped into his bedroom, and Carly and I went into mine.

We tumbled onto the bed and started making out. Then Carly straddled me and began a slow grind against my cock. She was still extremely wet, so my erection slid between her lips like a hot knife through butter. Carly rose up and popped just the head of my erection into her tight snatch before sliding it back out. She was about to tease me again when I pushed up into her. I was completely engulfed by her hot hole when she began riding me like there was no tomorrow—which was great—but I had to get the upper hand or she'd finish me off too soon.

I pulled her down for a deep, tongue-probing kiss and fondled her hard nipples until she started to moan. Then I rolled her over and eased back into her. I took my time, letting her feel every inch of my cock. As her moans increased in intensity, I thrust deeper and harder, kissing and sucking her neck and breasts until I pushed her



over the edge.

I kissed my way down to her pussy and began stroking her clit with my tongue, back and forth, up and down. Carly moaned and begged me to go faster. I pushed two fingers into her and stepped up the oral assault. She wanted me to make her come again, and I did. Suddenly her hands were holding my head close to her as her back arched and she let out a piercing scream. Then her body slowly relaxed and she sighed deeply.

Barely able to control myself, I turned Carly onto her hands and knees and entered her from behind. She was so hot and wet that it took only a few thrusts before I came, filling

I pulled Carly up and grabbed her from behind, buried my dick deep inside her, and thrust as hard as she could take it.

her up with my even hotter load.

We should have been too exhausted to continue, but we decided to take a shower together. When I started lathering her breasts, she reached for my cock and we were both ready to go again. Carly knelt down and took my cock into her mouth. The thought of filling that pretty mouth with my cream was tempting, but I just had to be inside her again. I pulled her up and grabbed her from behind, buried my dick deep inside her, and thrust as hard as she could take it. When I had her up against the shower wall, pounding away, she yelled out that she was coming. It was incredible. We were so busy coming and screaming that we didn't realize someone had been banging on the bathroom door.

When we'd both slumped to the bottom of the shower, we finally heard the knocking. It was Jeff telling us that we were hogging the shower. He said if we wanted to keep fucking, we should go back to the bedroom. Of course, we did.—S.M., North Carolina



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■ The Best Revenge

As I showered, I thought about which earrings would match the sexy outfit I'd bought for my night out with Hank. I had big plans, thanks to my cheating, soon-to-be-ex-husband, Jon. Hank worked with Jon and, as it turned out, happened to be Jon's least favorite person—and my guilty pleasure. Hank was coming to pick me up, but since I was running late, I'd told him to just come in and make himself comfortable.

I was washing my hair when I heard Hank's voice. I could barely see the outline of his broad shoulders as I peered through the steamy shower door. I thought I saw him quickly tuck something colorful behind his back, but before I could ask, he called out, "I brought wine. Would you like a glass before dinner?"

I laughed and said, "Sure. And make yourself at home while you're at it!" Then I ordered him out of the bathroom and finished rinsing my hair. I opened the shower door a little so I could snag a towel from the rack, but Hank was back, holding a towel in one hand and a wineglass in the other. I grabbed the towel, wrapped it around me, then stepped out of the shower. He pretended to cover his eyes while peeking between his fingers. I opened my towel and flashed him, then ran off giggling, with him in pursuit. He caught me in the bedroom and spun me around to face him. I kissed him, tasting the wine I'd yet to sip. With our mouths still locked together, I led him toward the bed. We sank into the comforter and I let him unwrap my towel.

"You're still wet," he said, kissing his way down my legs.

I laughed and said, "You're wicked. Come back up here."

"In a minute," he said.

I quivered as I felt his tongue delve into me and his fingers brush my clit. My breathing became more rapid as the intensity built and my hips undulated involuntarily. He sucked on my pleasure point and pushed two fingers inside me. Then he curled them and pressed upward at just the right spot, sending me into orbit. Gripping the comforter between clenched fists, I came in a rush, screaming, "Yes—there, right there!"

I unclenched my fists as he began kissing his way back up to my lips. I unbuckled his belt and opened his fly. I loved this guy's cock! It wasn't much

bigger than my husband's, but it was a lot thicker and really filled me.

My hips rose and he was inside me. We moved together in rhythmic ecstasy, as if we'd been lovers all our lives and not just a couple of weeks. My orgasm was rising in me as his cock pistoned in and out. I felt him tense up and explode inside me as his last thrust pushed me over the edge. We were both out of breath and drenched in sweat. As he rolled off me, I saw a bouquet of roses on the floor that he had dropped while pursuing me.

"Wine and flowers," I said as I kissed him again, running my hands over his shoulders. "You're definitely on the right track!"—*F.R., Virginia*

■ Good Vibrations

All day I had been feeling a little horny, but with my husband away on a weekend fishing trip, I was left to tend to my own needs. When I checked the time, I realized my friend Lori would be arriving any minute to pick me up. We'd made plans to go to a bar, so playtime would have to wait until later.

The drinks only added fuel to the fire, and I knew I'd have to make it an early night. I told Lori about my "problem" and what I planned to do about it when I got home. Lori was always excited to try new things, so I wasn't entirely surprised when she asked if she could join me. Why not?

We finished our drinks and went

He caught me in the bedroom and spun me around. I quivered as his tongue delved into me and brushed my clit.

back to my place. Lori selected one of the dildos from my dresser drawer, and I grabbed a vibrator. Then we stripped down to our bras and panties, and I put on a porno DVD for us to watch.

Fifteen minutes into the DVD, our bras came off and we watched each other squeeze our breasts and pinch our stiff nipples, ignoring the movie. Lori has a great pair of tits, with incredibly large, dark-brown nipples. As I watched her kneading her big nips, I slipped my hand inside my panties.

Lori slid over next to me and told me to take them off. She said she wanted to see me touch myself. I slowly slid down my panties and watched the excitement in Lori's eyes as I licked my fingers and rubbed them back and forth over my throbbing clit, before sliding them inside my sopping-wet pussy.

"God, Rachel. Watching you finger yourself and hearing how wet you are is making me so hot!" Lori said. Then she pulled off her own panties and plunged two fingers inside her pussy. Lori moaned, spread her legs wide, and began thrusting her fingers hard and deep. "Oh, I'm coming!" Lori cried





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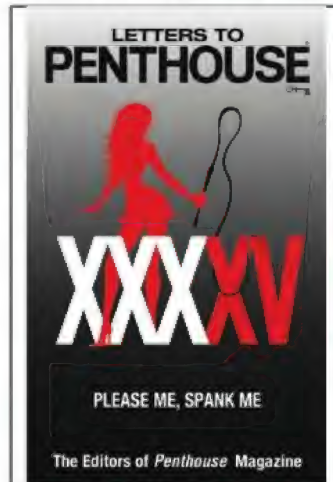
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out as I took in the amazing sight of her climax spilling onto her hand.

Lori told me to straddle her. When I did, she pulled my pussy tight to her mouth and began eating me out. The entire time I cried out how good it felt having her suck me off, and that I couldn't wait to come. When I finally went over the edge, I had one of the most intense orgasms of my life. After that, we got into a sixty-nine and licked and sucked each other's cunt. The next 20 minutes were nothing short of incredible. My first time with another woman was truly amazing.

Lori stayed with me the rest of the night. As satisfying as the experience was, we agreed it was far too risky for us to repeat and promised each other that we would never do it again. We kept that promise for exactly one week!—R.C., Michigan

Duty Calls

Recently I was called to duty—jury duty. As it happens, fulfilling my civic responsibility was a fantasy

come true.

While I was waiting, I found myself looking at my fellow prospective jurors. It didn't take long to notice the long and lovely legs across the room. They were attached to a gorgeous woman in her late twenties, with reddish-blond shoulder-length hair. She wore a black skirt that was short enough to have my imagination running wild.

The next day, she wore a red miniskirt and a black blouse that showed off her beautiful breasts. This time, I sat directly across from her so I could get a better view. As my eyes caressed her legs, she crossed one over the other, giving me a split-second glimpse of her succulent bare twat.

Just then my name was called, and I realized that the only thing that would conceal my rock-hard erection was a full-length coat. Fortunately, my lovely's name, Bethany, was called right after mine. She looked up at me as she grabbed her purse, noticed my boner, and gave me a sly smile. We were instructed to go to lunch, and to return at just past one o'clock. I knew this was my moment to act. Just as I started to talk to her, she asked me to join her for lunch.

We found our way to a cozy little restaurant. After some polite small talk, the conversation heated up.

Lori pulled my pussy to her mouth and ate me out. My first time with a woman was amazing!

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She said she was engaged and that her fiancé was not the kind of guy who would do spontaneous things. The day before, after leaving the courthouse, she'd gone to his job and sat across from him with her legs spread wide, pantyless then, too, trying to get him to do her right there in the office.

"So did he?" I asked.

She said he wouldn't. This just about blew me away. How could any guy in his right mind pass on such an opportunity? I told her that if it had been me, I wouldn't have let her down.

"Care to prove that?"

We hurried back to the courthouse and found an empty meeting room. She sat on the table, lifted her knees, and spread those long legs. There it was, even better than it looked before. Her pussy was already shining with moisture. She slid in her finger, driving it deep into her box, then moved it around her clit in a figure-eight motion.

I'd reached my limit. I buried my face in her pie. She was so wet that her juices were dripping from her cunt. As I snatched every drop with my agile tongue, she rocked her hips, trying to pull my tongue deeper into her and begging for my wand.

When I stood up, she unzipped my pants. My cock was so hard and hot that I thought it would burn her hands. She said, "Now I want you to fuck me."

I pushed into her pussy with one hard thrust, and when I started to pound her, she met every thrust with one of her own. She was talking dirty, asking for it hard and fast, and getting herself all worked up. When her cunt spasmed in orgasm, I exploded.

We quickly got dressed, then she kissed me like I had never been kissed before, rubbed my cock, and said, "Wait until later." We went back to the jury room, took our seats, and waited for our courtroom assignment.

The next day, when we broke for lunch, she suggested we eat in. We went into the meeting room and I watched her in total fascination as she lay back on the table, opened those gorgeous legs, and said she wanted my meat in her mouth.

"I'm here to serve," I said. I dropped my pants to my ankles and immediately felt her tongue on the head of my dong. As she sucked on me, she fucked herself with three fingers. After she brought herself to climax, she slid a wet finger into my asshole. I thought I would come at any second, and told her I had to have



her. She said, "Then bend me over and take me."

As soon as I assumed the position behind her, she told me she wanted me in her ass. She pulled a tube of lube out of her purse, and I readied her for my hot-beef injection. As soon as I was in all the way, balls against her wet twat, I realized she was fucking herself again. I could feel her thrusting fingers rubbing against my sac each time I bottomed out in her ass. It added an amazing sensation to the down-and-dirty appeal of butt-fucking a hot-as-hell chick who was pretty much a stranger. She quivered through her climax right before I pulled out and shot my wad onto her back.

After lunch the judge dismissed us, saying the two parties had settled during the break. I kissed Bethany good-bye, knowing I'd probably never see her again. But to this day I can't walk into a courthouse without thinking about our call to duty. —M.S., Indiana

Full-Service Sitter

I've been reading "Forum" for years, and have always been a little envious of the guys who have such erotic adventures. But recently my luck changed, and I had

She was talking dirty, asking for it hard and fast, and getting all worked up. When her cunt spasmed in orgasm, I exploded.

a fantastic experience.

It started when I got divorced from my wife, and ended up with sole custody of my six-year-old son. During the school year, I had no problems caring for him, as a neighbor was nice enough to keep an eye on him after school until I got home from work. Then my schedule changed, and I realized I needed to hire a babysitter. Someone told me about a good service. The first girl they sent for an interview was Janet, a 19-year-old knockout with dark hair and a bubbly personality. My son liked her a lot and her background checked out, so I gave her the job. She was really attractive. I had to make sure I was on my best behavior around her, for she was the kind of girl who could really get a man's pulse racing.

One Friday night, Janet called and said she couldn't make it, but could arrange for her roommate to cover for her. She assured me that the roommate, Margaret, was up to the job. I told Janet that would be fine.

Margaret showed up at 5:30 on the dot. She was blonde, blue-eyed, and very well built—a lot like Janet in that respect. When I got home at midnight, I found Margaret sitting on the sofa, watching television. She said Janet was going to pick her up shortly.

I went to the kitchen to make a call. When I came back into the living room, both Margaret and Janet were waiting for me—completely naked, their clothes in a small pile on the floor. As I stared open-mouthed at the two beauties, I realized that my imagination had not done them justice. "I've been building up the nerve to seduce you since we first met," Janet

said. "Margaret is lending me moral support." It was Margaret who came over, took off my pants and briefs, and led me over to the sofa, where Janet unbuttoned my shirt.

As Margaret took my rapidly stiffening cock into her warm mouth, Janet placed her 38D breasts in my face. I grabbed hold of one and began sucking on the other. Margaret kept sucking my cock until I came in her mouth. She swallowed as much as she could get.

When we were all on the floor, Janet started stroking my cock. Before I knew it I was hard again, and then I was inside Janet's pussy. She was tight, but good and wet, and her pussy seemed to suck me inside her. As I fucked her, she was

bringing Margaret off with her tongue and mouth.

After a short intermission, I ate Janet out, tasting both her juices and my own. Then Margaret wanted her pussy eaten again, so I took care of that. We had the time of our lives, and the girls decided to spend the weekend with me, since my son was going to my parents' house in the morning. We certainly didn't get much sleep.

Janet has a new roommate now, Kim, and she's positively stunning. I have a feeling that Janet may have let Kim in on some of our secrets, because she's been picking Janet up a lot. I'm just waiting for Janet to need Kim for moral support. —O.S., Arkansas

As Margaret took my cock into her warm mouth, Janet placed her 38D breasts in my face.

■ Party Pickup

The party was going strong when I arrived. I was sitting on the couch when he entered the room. There



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were plenty of other seats, but he sat next to me. I felt him staring and I turned toward him. He was so close that I felt a spark of excitement. He was the hottest-looking man at the party. All I could think about was how soft his full lips would feel against mine. I boldly asked him if he wanted to kiss me. In response, he leaned in and gave me a kiss so deep, it warmed me all the way through and made me wet. There were so many sparks flying between us that we were out of breath when I finally broke the kiss.

He took my hand and led me out to the porch, pulled me into his arms, and kissed me again. His tongue tasted so sweet, and he felt so good. His hands were all over my body, rubbing my ass, squeezing my boobs, and pinching my nipples. Oh, and his hard cock was rubbing against my mound. I was so turned-on, I wanted him to fuck me right then and there. It was New Year's Eve in Minneapolis and it was way below freezing, but he made me so hot I felt like it was 90 degrees out.


Someone came out on the porch to smoke, so we broke our embrace and straightened our clothes. He grabbed my hand and pulled me back into the house, and we snuck into the back bedroom. We picked up right where we'd left off. As we kissed, I rubbed and stroked his dick. He was so hard that I didn't know how he could stand it, and I wanted to feel

After I came, I went to work on his dripping cock. He shot his load all over my hand minutes later.

that hardness inside me. I unzipped his pants to get my hands around his thick, meaty shaft as he put his hand down my pants. When he rubbed his finger against my clit, it felt so good I wanted to scream.

"Damn, baby. You're so wet." With his other hand, he unbuttoned my cardigan and pulled my bra cups down to expose my hard and sensitive nipples. When he sucked one, then the other, it sent shock waves straight to my pussy. He brought me to a tremendous climax, distracting me completely from the handjob I'd been giving him. After I came again, this time with two of his fingers deep in my pussy, I gathered my juices from my wet folds and used them to work on his dripping cock. He shot his load all over my hand a few minutes later.

We cleaned up in the attached bathroom, fixed our outfits, and got ready to return to the party. As he reached for the doorknob, he said, "Do I get your number this time, Heather?"

I giggled and said, "Maybe. Catch up with me again before you leave."—*H.R., Minnesota* 

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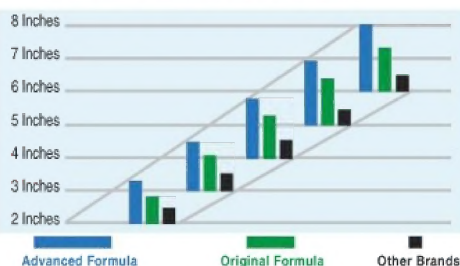
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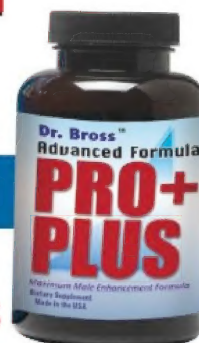
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The Queen of Badass


Wendy O. Williams knocked the music industry on its ass, spent her life fighting the status quo, and recorded one of the most empowering rock anthems of all time.

By Sarah Walker

Wendy Orlean Williams made her stage debut at the age of six, tap-dancing on *The Howdy Doody Show*. When she was 15, she ran away from her repressive family home in upstate New York to travel alone around the United States, and later throughout Europe. In 1976, at 27, she landed in New York City's Times Square, where she quickly became one of the stars of the X-rated performance-art lyceum Captain Kink's Sex Fantasy Theater. In 1978 she formed the Plasmatics, a punk-metal band that soon became regular headliners at CBGB, alongside the Talking Heads, Blondie, and the Ramones. The Plasmatics' infamous shows featured spectacular and dangerous theatrics, with Williams—in her platinum Mohawk and fetish gear—chain-sawing guitars, sledge-hammering TVs, and, at Manhattan's Pier 62 show in 1981, driving a Cadillac into the Hudson River. In the band's outlandish music videos, Williams performed her own stunts, including jumping from the roof of a moving school bus before it crashed into a wall of TVs, and climbing from a speeding convertible onto a ladder suspended from a low-flying plane, all without a safety harness.

Williams's stage performances were also sexually charged. In 1981 she was beaten unconscious by Milwaukee police when they raided a small club where the Plasmatics were performing. She was accused of indecent exposure and simulating a sexual act onstage for pretending to masturbate with the microphone. She took on the Milwaukee Police Department in court, and eventually the charges were dropped.

Williams took a stand in other ways, from fighting for her place in the male-dominated music industry to shining a spotlight on America's consumerist culture, the food industry, and even climate change. In the Plasmatics' foreboding 1987 album *Maggots*, for instance, a nightmare future is depicted in which the greenhouse effect (now known as global warming) creates human-size maggots that devour the planet. Williams was passionate, intelligent, and ahead of her time—politically progressive and an animal-rights activist, as well as a macrobioticist, strict vegetarian, and fitness devotee, as evidenced by her near-flawless physique.

Williams never experienced huge music-industry success, nor would she necessarily have welcomed it, but in 1985 she was nominated for a Grammy for Best Female Vocalist for her solo metal album *WOW*, which was produced by KISS frontman Gene Simmons. The album featured what was to become Williams's best-known song, the rock anthem "It's My Life." That same year, Williams summed up her remarkable life and career during an interview. Sadly, her words also help explain her 1998 suicide: "In this world, there's so much that doesn't make any sense to me at all. My music and being able to just let myself go is one of the few breaths of sanity in an insane world.... I've got to be free. I've gotta do what I want to do, what can I say?" 

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